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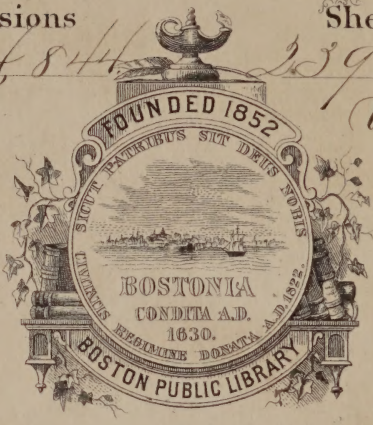

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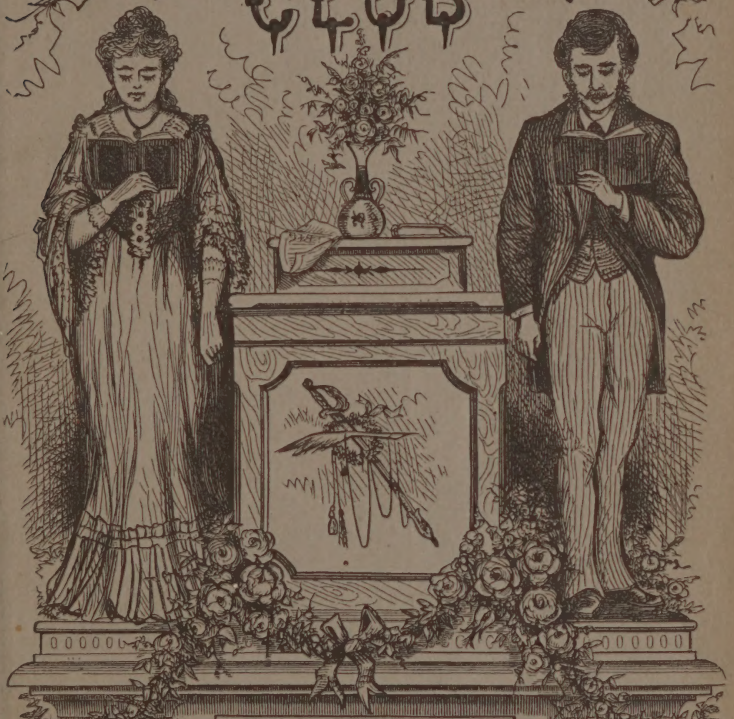
No. 12.

50 SELECTIONS IN PROSE AND POETRY

THE READING CLUB



EDITED BY

GEORGE M. BAKER.

LEE & SHEPARD, Publishers, BOSTON

M. V. S.

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FOR

READINGS AND RECITATIONS.

EDITED BY

GEORGE M. BAKER.

No. 12.

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THE READING-CLUB.

MEMORY.

'Tis beauteous night; the stars look brightly down
Upon the earth decked in her robe of snow.
No light gleams at the windows save my own,
Which gives its cheer to midnight and to me.
And now, with noiseless step, sweet memory comes,
And leads me gently through her twilight realms.
What poet's tuneful lyre has ever sung,
Or delicatest pencil e'er portrayed
The enchanted, shadowy land where memory dwells?
It has its valleys, cheerless, lone and drear,
Dark shaded by the mournful cypress tree,
And yet its sunlit mountain tops are bathed
In heaven's own blue. Upon its craggy cliffs,
Robed in the dreamy light of distant years,
Are clustered joys serene of other days;
Upon its gently sloping hillsides bend
The weeping willows o'er the sacred dust
Of dear departed ones; yet, in that land,
Where'er our footstep falls upon the shore,
They that were sleeping, rise from out the dust
Of death's long silent years and round us stand
As erst they did before the prison tomb
Received their clay within its voiceless halls
The heavens that bend above that land are hung
With clouds of various hues; some dark and cold,
Surcharged with sorrow, cast their sombre shade
Upon the sunny, joyous land below.
Others are floating through the dreamy air,
White as the falling snow, their margins tinged
With gold and crimson hues; their shadows fall
Upon the flowery meads and sunny slopes,
Soft as the shadow of an angel's wing.

When the rough battle of the day is done,
And evening's peace falls gently on the heart,
I bound away across the noisy years,
Unto the utmost verge of memory's land,
Where earth and sky in dreamy distance meet,
And memory dim with dark oblivion joins,
Where woke the first remembered sounds, that fell
Upon the ear in childhood's early morn.
And wandering thence, along the rolling years
I see the shadow of my former self,
Gliding from childhood up to man's estate.
The path of youth winds down through many a vale,
And on the brink of many a dread abyss,
From out whose darkness comes no ray of light.
Save that a phantom dances o'er the gulf,
And beckons toward the verge. Again the path
Leads o'er a summit where the sunbeams fall.
And thus, in light and shade, sunshine and gloom,
Sorrow and joy, this life-path leads along.

JAMES A. GARFIELD.

NANCY SIKES.

IT was nearly two hours before daybreak; that time, which, in the autumn of the year, may be truly called the dead of night; when the streets are silent and deserted; when even sound appears to slumber, and profligacy and riot have staggered home to dream; it was at this still and silent hour that the Jew sat watching in his old lair, with face so distorted and pale, and eyes so red and bloodshot, that he looked less like a man than like some hideous phantom, moist from the grave, and worried by an evil spirit.

He sat crouching over a cold hearth, wrapped in an old torn coverlet, with his face turned towards a wasting candle that stood upon a table by his side. His right hand was raised to his lips, and as, absorbed in thought, he bit his long, black nails, he disclosed among his toothless gums a few such fangs as should have been a dog's or rat's.

Stretched upon a mattress on the floor lay Noah Claypole, fast asleep. Towards him the old man sometimes

directed his eyes for an instant, and then brought them back again to the candle; which, with long-burnt wick drooping almost double, and hot grease falling down in clots upon the table, plainly showed that his thoughts were busy elsewhere.

Indeed they were. Mortification at the overthrow of his notable scheme; hatred of the girl who had dared to palter with strangers; an utter distrust of the sincerity of her refusal to yield him up; bitter disappointment at the loss of his revenge on Sikes; the fear of detection, and ruin, and death; and a fierce and deadly rage kindled by all; these were the passionate considerations which, following close upon each other with rapid and ceaseless whirl, shot through the brain of Fagin, as every evil thought and blackest purpose lay working at his heart.

He sat without changing his attitude in the least, or appearing to take the smallest heed of time, until his quick ear seemed to be attracted by a footstep in the street.

"At last," muttered the Jew, wiping his dry and fevered mouth. "At last!"

The bell rang gently as he spoke. He crept up stairs to the door, and presently returned accompanied by a man muffled to the chin, who carried a bundle under one arm. Sitting down, and throwing back his outer coat, the man displayed the burly frame of Sikes.

"There!" he said, laying the bundle on the table. "Take care of that, and do the most you can with it. It's been trouble enough to get; I thought I should have been there three hours ago."

Fagin laid his hand upon the bundle, and locking it in the cupboard, sat down again without speaking. But he did not take his eyes off the robber for an instant during this action; and now that they sat over against each other, face to face, he looked fixedly at him, with his lips quivering so violently, and his face so altered by the emotions which had mastered him, that the housebreaker involuntarily drew back his chair, and surveyed him with a look of real affright.

"Wot now?" cried Sikes. "Wot do you look at a man so for?"

The Jew raised his right hand, and shook his trembling forefinger in the air; but his passion was so great, that the power of speech was for the moment gone.

"Demme!" said Sikes, feeling in his breast with a look of alarm. "He's gone mad. I must look to myself here."

"No, no," rejoined Fagin, finding his voice. "It's not — you're not the person, Bill. I've no fault to find with you."

"Oh, you haven't, haven't you?" said Sikes, looking sternly at him, and ostentatiously passing a pistol into a more convenient pocket. "That's lucky — for one of us. Which one that is don't matter."

"I've got that to tell you, Bill," said the Jew, drawing his chair nearer, "will make you worse than me."

"Ay?" returned the robber, with an incredulous air. "Tell away! Look sharp or Nance will think I'm lost."

"Lost!" cried Fagin. "She has pretty well settled that, in her own mind, already."

Sikes looked with an aspect of great perplexity into the Jew's face, and reading no satisfactory explanation of the riddle there, clenched his coat collar in his huge hand and shook him soundly.

"Speak, will you!" he said; "or if you don't, it shall be for want of breath. Open your mouth and say wot you've got to say in plain words. Out with it, you thundering old cur, out with it!"

"Suppose that lad that's lying there ——" Fagin began.

Sikes turned round to where Noah was sleeping, as if he had not previously observed him. "Well!" he said, resuming his former position.

"Suppose that lad," pursued the Jew, "was to peach — to blow upon us all — first seeking out the right folks for the purpose, and then having a meeting with 'em in the street to paint our likenesses, describe every mark that they might know us by, and the crib where we might be most easily taken. Suppose he was to do all this, and besides to blow upon a plant we've all been in, more or less — of his own fancy; not grabbed, trapped, tried, earwigged by the parson and brought to it on bread and water,— but of his own fancy; to please his own taste; stealing out at nights to find those most interested against us, and peaching to them. Do you hear me?" cried the Jew, his eyes flashing with rage. "Suppose he did all this, what then?"

"What then!" replied Sikes; with a tremendous oath. "If he was left alive till I came, I'd grind his skull under the iron heel of my boot into as many grains as there are hairs upon his head."

"What if *I* did it!" cried the Jew, almost in a yell. "*I*, that know so much, and could hang so many besides myself!"

"I don't know," replied Sikes, clenching his teeth and turning white at the mere suggestion. "I'd do something in the jail that 'ud get me put in irons; and if I was tried along with you, I'd fall upon you with them in the open court, and beat your brains out afore the people. I should have such strength," muttered the robber, poising his brawny arm, "that I could smash your head as if a loaded wagon had gone over it."

"You would?"

"Would I!" said the housebreaker. "Try me."

"If it was Charley, or the Dodger, or Bet, or ——"

"I don't care who," replied Sikes, impatiently. "Whoever it was, I'd serve them the same."

Fagin looked hard at the robber; and, motioning him to be silent, stooped over the bed upon the floor, and shook the sleeper to rouse him. Sikes leaned forward in his chair: looking on with his hands upon his knees, as if wondering much what all this questioning and preparation was to end in.

"Bolter, Bolter! Poor lad!" said Fagin, looking up with an expression of devilish anticipation, and speaking slowly and with marked emphasis. "He's tired — tired watching for *her* so long,— watching for *her*, Bill."

"Wot d'ye mean?" asked Sikes, drawing back.

The Jew made no answer, but bending over the sleeper again, hauled him into a sitting posture. When his assumed name had been repeated several times, Noah rubbed his eyes, and, giving a heavy yawn, looked sleepily about him.

"Tell me that again — once again, just for him to hear," said the Jew, pointing to Sikes as he spoke.

"Tell yer what?" asked the sleepy Noah, shaking himself pettishly.

"That about — NANCY," said the Jew, clutching Sikes by the wrist, as if to prevent his leaving the house before he had heard enough. "You followed her?"

"Yes."

"To London Bridge?"

"Yes."

"Where she met two people?"

"So she did."

"A gentleman, and a lady that she had gone to of her own accord before, who asked her to give up all her pals, and Monks first, which she did — and to describe him, which she did — and to tell her what house it was that we meet at, and go to, which she did — and where it could be best watched from, which she did — and what time the people went there, which she did. She did all this. She told it all every word without a threat, without a murmur — she did — did she not?" cried the Jew, half mad with fury.

"All right," replied Noah, scratching his head. "That's just what it was!"

"What did they say, about last Sunday?" demanded the Jew.

"About last Sunday!" replied Noah, considering. "Why I told yer that before."

"Again. Tell it again!" cried Fagin, tightening his grasp on Sikes, and brandishing his other hand aloft, as the foam flew from his lips.

"They asked her," said Noah, who, as he grew more wakeful, seemed to have a dawning perception who Sikes was, "they asked her why she didn't come last Sunday, as she promised. She said she couldn't."

"Why — why?" interrupted the Jew, triumphantly. "Tell him that."

"Because she was forcibly kept at home by Bill, the man she had told them of before," replied Noah.

"What more of him?" cried the Jew. "What more of the man she had told them of before? Tell him that, tell him that."

"Why, that she couldn't very easily get out of doors unless he knew where she was going to," said Noah; "and so the first time she went to see the lady, she — ha! ha! ha! it made me laugh when she said it, that it did — she gave him a drink of laudanum."

"Hell's fire!" cried Sikes, breaking fiercely from the Jew. "Let me go!"

Flinging the old man from him, he rushed from the room, and darted, wildly and furiously, up the stairs.

"Bill, Bill!" cried the Jew, following him hastily. "A word. Only a word."

The word would not have been exchanged, but that the housebreaker was unable to open the door: on which he

was expending fruitless oaths and violence, when the Jew came panting up.

"Let me out," said Sikes. "Don't speak to me; it's not safe. Let me out, I say,"

"Hear me speak a word," rejoined the Jew, laying his hand upon the lock. "You won't be ——"

"Well," replied the other.

"You won't be — too — violent, Bill?" whined the Jew.

The day was breaking, and there was light enough for the men to see each other's faces. They exchanged one brief glance; there was a fire in the eyes of both, which could not be mistaken.

"I mean," said Fagin, showing that he felt all disguise was now useless, "not too violent for safety. Be crafty, Bill, and not too bold."

Sikes made no reply; but, pulling open the door, of which the Jew had turned the lock, dashed into the silent streets.

Without one pause, or moment's consideration; without once turning his head to the right or left, or raising his eyes to the sky, or lowering them to the ground, but looking straight before him with savage resolution; his teeth so tightly compressed that the strained jaw seemed starting through his skin; the robber held on his headlong course, nor muttered a word, nor relaxed a muscle, until he reached his own door. He opened it, softly, with a key; strode lightly up the stairs; and entering his own room, double-locked the door, and lifting a heavy table against it, drew back the curtain of the bed.

The girl was lying, half dressed, upon it. He had roused her from her sleep, for she raised herself with a hurried and startled look.

"Get up!" said the man.

"It *is* you, Bill!" said the girl, with an expression of pleasure at his return.

"It is," was the reply. "Get up."

There was a candle burning, but the man hastily drew it from the candlestick, and hurled it under the grate. Seeing the faint light of early day without, the girl rose to undraw the curtain.

"Let it be," said Sikes, thrusting his hand before her. "There's light enough for what I've got to do."

"Bill," said the girl, in the low voice of alarm, "why do you look like that at me!"

The robber sat regarding her for a few seconds, with dilated nostrils and heaving breast; and then, grasping her by the head and throat, dragged her into the middle of the room, and looking once towards the door, placed his heavy hand upon her mouth.

"Bill, Bill!" gasped the girl, wrestling with the strength of mortal fear, — "I — I won't scream or cry — not once — hear me — speak to me — tell me what I have done!"

"You know, you she devil!" returned the robber, suppressing his breath. "You were watched to-night; every word you said was heard."

"Then spare my life for the love of Heaven, as I spared yours," rejoined the girl clinging to him. "Bill, dear Bill, you cannot have the heart to kill me. Oh! think of all I have given up, only this one night for you. You *shall* have time to think, and save yourself from this crime: I will not loose my hold, you cannot throw me off. Bill, Bill, for dear God's sake, for your own, for mine, stop before you spill my blood! I have been true to you, upon my guilty soul I have!"

The man struggled violently to release his arms; but those of the girl were clasped round his, and tear her as he would he could not tear them away.

"Bill," cried the girl, striving to lay her head upon his breast, "the gentleman, and that dear lady, told me to-night of a home in some foreign country where I could end my days in solitude and peace. Let me see them again, and beg them, on my knees, to show the same goodness and mercy to you: and let us both leave this dreadful place, and far apart lead better lives, and forget how we have lived, except in prayers, and never see each other more. It is never too late to repent. They told me so — I feel it now — but we must have time — a little, little time!"

The house-breaker freed one arm, and grasped his pistol. The certainty of immediate detection if he fired, flashed across his mind even in the midst of his fury; and he beat it twice with all the force he could summon upon the upturned face that almost touched his own.

She staggered and fell; nearly blinded with the blood that rained down from a deep gash in her forehead; but raising herself, with difficulty, on her knees, drew from her bosom a white handkerchief — Rose Maylie's own — and holding it up, in her folded hands, as high towards Heaven

as her feeble strength would allow, breathed one prayer for mercy to her Maker.

It was a ghastly figure to look upon. The murderer, staggering backward to the wall, and, shutting out the sight with his hand, seized a heavy club and struck her down.

Dickens' Oliver Twist.

SUN-BURST.

I.

Oh! hear you the sound of shouting far over the eastern waves?
The voice of a people calling, "Come help us, for we are slaves?"
And see you the banners flying, the sinister glow of steel,
As the hordes of the tyrant gather, and the plains beneath them reel?

Why do the valleys of Erin ring with the sound of a name,
Once it were treason to utter? Why are her hill-tops aflame?
Has the long slumber been broken! Have the dead spoken at last?
Sending the slogan of battle far on the wild-sweeping blast!

Ah, but the years are returning! Time is the writer of all;
He will repay for the slaughter; his voice will answer the call,
That loud through the echoing ages, the ages of hatred has told
How the hand of the slayer has reddened, his heart in its anger grown cold.

II.

"What have we done that is criminal? Why are we holden in chains?
Where is the blot on our 'scutcheon? Where on our record the stains?
Have we not stood for our brothers, when, like a fierce crimson rain,
Over and over our bodies surged the red blood of our slain?

Who, when our graves grew in number, who when our
hearthstones were bare,
Came with the burden of plenty, strong-limbed, and loyal,
and fair,
Was it the nation that held us? She who grew rich with
our spoil?
Rich from our courage in battle, rich from our daring in
toil?

No! In her halls she was feasting. What though we
starved at her door?
We, who had beaten her foeman back from her wave-beaten
shore;
We had no grain from her threshing; we had no wine from
her press;
Only the scorn of her silence, while the store in our hovels
grew less.

"Far over wide leagues of ocean came the white sails of the
ships,
Bearing the bread that would help us, the wine that was
sweet to our lips;
What have we then to be glad for, what have we then to
repay,
To her who listened unheeding, holding her shut hands
away?

"Nothing but hate do we owe her, nothing but battle and
wrath;
She who has grown on our hunger, the serpent that rose in
our path;
That filled our valleys with wailing, and stole the strength
of our lives,
And left in our desolate dwellings the tears and moaning of
wives.

"Look at the years in their passing; what have they given
the world?
Hope for the gladness of nations; thought at all tyranny
hurled;
Freedom for men held in bondage; deeds that were kindly
and just;
Only one land was forgotten, one banner still trails in the
dust.

"Nothing have we to be glad for; once we had glory and pride,
Holding the beacon of promise, sending our call far and wide;
Then when the brightness of morning shone through the swift fading mist,
Loud rose the sound of our progress, songs in our valleys made tryst.

"Say we are hard in our anger, say that our hands have grown red;
Have we not watched in the darkness, watched by our murdered dead,
Watched in the land that bore us, the land that is ours by right,
Telling our sorrow in whispers, and fearing the dawn of light?

"Ours is the patient waiting, and ours is the garnered wrong;
We have seen the bright days darken, and the years grow cold and long;
We have worked when our hands were weary, but we never reaped the gain;
They have gathered the wheat and comfort, and left us the chaff and pain.

"Yet we envy not their riches, let them keep their heavy gold,
And leave us our ancient birthright, the freedom we won of old,
When the dawning flashed in splendor on the lines of level spears,
And we charged the Danish foeman, while the air grew loud with cheers.

"The days of waiting are numbered, the time of our serving past;
You can hear the braying of trumpets, the roll of drums on the blast;
And now, when the war clouds gather, we will stand as oft we have stood,
When we held the front of the battle, and the earth was red with blood.

"Oh! men who have seen the sun-burst, the radiant coming of morn,
Surge over the purple mountains, and shine on your bending corn;
By the love that is your triumph, by the blood that made you free,
Send us back a shout of greeting, across the wide reaches of sea.

"Now when the foe is marching, and the great guns grimly frown,
And the heavy wrath of the tempest on our worn land bears down,
When the lurid light of the bale-fires is gleaming in the sky,
Out through the growing darkness we send you our passionate cry."

III.

Why are the fetters clanking? and why do the bright swords shine?
Is there coming another harvest of blood that is red as wine?
Yes, up through the heights of purple you can hear the cry, wind-blown,
Of a nation, loudly calling to be brought unto its own.

Ah, but the years are returning, and the dead will not lie still;
You can see their garments trailing far along each windy hill;
And the air is full of moaning, and the earth is salt with tears,
And the hate that is strong in battle is the bitter hate of years.

The high waves surge on the headlands, the wild winds sweep through the land,
And the murmurs of strife are rising: who now will idle stand?
For the tyrants are banded together, they will strike again and again,
And the struggle is that of Freedom, the strong, sweet Freedom of men.

THOMAS S. COLLIER.

THE LITTLE PRESBYTERIAN MAID.

"My little Presbyterian maid,
Tell me why thou 'rt so shy
I hold thee fast. Be not afraid!
No harm shall come thee nigh.
Dost love me? Speak, and tell me so!
By thy silence I am pained."
"I love thee well, as thou dost know;
For it was *foreordained!*"

"Ordained? Before? By whom, my sweet,—
Thy father or my mother?"—
"By Father of us all, 'twas meant
That we should love each other."
"Nay, tell me plainer, little maid,
I'm but a careless fellow;
And ne'er before my vows have paid,
Since cowslip blooms were yellow."

"I mean," she said, with reverent grace,
And crimson blushes burning,
"That from all time thou wert for me
That love that sure was coming."—
"Thank God, I came, nor was delayed;
For should some happier brother,
Have found thee first, my precious maid,
Thou mightest have loved another."

"Nay; suitors oft have sought my hand,
In lovers' art perfected;
But then, they were not like to thee,
From out all time *elected*."
"Sweet heart, thy doctrine, strangely wise
Most gracious honor does me;
Yet how were we to know all this,
Is that which does confuse me."

"No sparrow falleth to the ground
Without our Father knoweth;
No heart but hath somewhere its mate,
To which in time it goeth."

And so, by *inward consciousness*
My soul thy soul approving,
I felt a *special providence*
Had sent thee for my loving."

"I ask no more; I am content
With all thy sweet believing.
But *never lose thy faith*, sweet maid
Or else I die a-grieving.
For I'll confess, I greatly prize
Thy mystery of *election;*
And none can see thy face and doubt
The doctrine of *perfection*." ST. LEON.

THE FIRE-WORSHIPPERS.

ONCE on a time — so run the legends old,
In days long past, by ancient granddames told;
Once on a time a mighty giant came
Into a land of fair and peaceful fame;
Where sturdy husbandmen, with daily toil,
Plucked the rich spoils from out the fruity soil;
Where buxom housewives hummed sweet labor's song,
And happy maidens danced the groves among;
Contentment's longing arms were folded here,
And joy's broad pinions sought no loftier sphere;
Earth's choicest colors decked both hill and dell,
Till, like a blight, the giant's shadow fell.
He crept into their midst with stealthy tread,
With weary trembling limbs and drooping head;
And asked both food and shelter for a day,
That he might rest, then pass upon his way.
They bade him welcome, as with wondering eyes,
They gazed upon his more than mortal size,
They brought the choicest products of the land,
And comforts spread about on every hand;
Till 'neath the genial warmth their welcome gave,
He poured forth tales of knights and squires brave,
Of grand old castles and of maidens fair,
Of water nymphs, and spirits of the air;
Until they, quite enchanted, bade him stay,
And make his home with them for many a day;

Consent he gave, and straight these rustics strove
To rear a palace worthy of their Jove.
With rich content to fill his giant frame,
And honors pay unto his mighty name,
They left the plough and workshop at the nod
Of this their pleasure-consecrated god;
By day and night they listened to the lays
That from his tongue set all their hearts ablaze,
And though neglect adown their meadows strode,
They lingered still about his charmed abode.
But pleasure palls at last where'er 'tis sought,
And hottest hunted, quickest end is brought.
And so at last our worshippers perforce,
Must needs attempt to change their wayward course,
By gently hinting to the giant grim,
That place no longer was the place for him.
But giants are a strangely perverse race,
And hard to root from out their dwelling-place.
Hints would not serve, and so to serve their need
They went and asked the giant to "secede."
The giant heard this trembling delegation
With all the grace befitting his high station,
And then made answer, "I came here to stay,
By invitation, with you many a day.
I mean to stay, compel your bended knee.
You wish a change, a change you now shall see."
With that he sat him down the guests among,
And glowing legends rolled from off his tongue,
Tales of enchantment, talismanic power,
Of witch's cavern, and of naiad's bower.
But ah! alas! for them the charm was gone,
The rose was plucked, the bush bore but the thorn.
The tongue that did those glowing deeds proclaim,
Was now to them a hissing tongue of flame.
And thus this people lived, and thus they died,
A frightful demon ever at their side,
Consuming lands and goods and hard-won wealth,
And breaking up the fountain-heads of health.
Their pliant ears once caught by pleasure's lyre.
They found their idol but a god of fire.

Along our paths a giant wends his way,
Mighty as he, the giant of that day,

Luring with pleasure's wiles the young and free,
To join the throng that lowly bow the knee.
I see him in yon gaily festooned hall,
Where dainties rise obedient to the call,
Enthroned as monarch that gay throng among.
All bend to him with praises on the tongue.
Bright glowing pictures at his bidding rise,
And 'neath his smile the gloomy moment flies.
Imagination's visions dawn divine,
Touched by his magic sceptre, rosy wine.
I meet this busy giant everywhere,
I hear his glowing legends in the air,
I see wild worshippers around him throng,
Caught by the syren music of his song.
I meet him once again where famine gaunt
Appears yon dark and dismal room to haunt.
Where on his bended knees a wretch doth cry,
"Grant me thine aid, great king, or else I die.
Roll o'er my burning brain oblivion's scroll
And grant a moment's quiet to my soul.
Drive conscience back, who knocks for entrance there.
And haunting demons from my presence scare."
The monarch, smiling, hears his subject's cry,
And passeth not his fierce petition by,
Sends through his veins those thrills that long ago
Bade fancy's ever-changing scenes to glow.
But now, alas! those fires too fiercely burned,
Have fancy's gleams to mouldering ashes turned,
And where the glowing pictures were before,
Dark ghostly shadows dance the canvas o'er.
He sees damp floors, cracked ceilings, and bleak walls,
He hears through every crack the wind's loud calls,
He sees one kneeling patient at his side
Who in the years long past he claimed as bride.
He sees the lines of grief which years have sown,
And counts the furrows ploughed her cheek adown,
And scenes of older days unbidden creep,
In visions o'er the drunkard's broken sleep.
He dreams of gardens, where together strayed
A hopeful youth, a fair and happy maid.
Hands clasping hands, eyes with warm lovelight glowing,
And yearning hearts towards each other growing.
He hears the whispered vow of days long past,
"Faithful to thee where'er thy lot is cast."

He wakes to find the brilliant vision flown,
The happy maid, a saddened woman grown.
The vows of love he gave to curses turned,
And she so fondly sought now rudely spurned.
Along the path they've trod, his vision flying,
Discerns heaped up abuse and misery lying,
But yet he reads upon that face, downcast,
"Faithful to thee, still faithful to the last."
To drown his thoughts once more he turns his eyes
To where the deity he worships lies.
But now how changed, the winning smile has flown,
Naught but the monster's fleshless bones are shown,
From out his hollow skull two balls of fire
Flash on his victim passions fierce and dire.
From fleshless lips a tongue of flame shoots out,
Consuming all it coils itself about.
The victim shudders, turns, and seeks to save
His bruisèd body from a drunkard's grave.
The wife with broken prayers doth piteous plead
For succor in her loved one's hour of need.
But still the hideous demon keeps his throne,
And claims the trembling victim for his own.
Can nothing save him? Must the wife's despair,
The father's pleading, and the mother's prayer,
Be all in vain, when loved ones go astray,
To save them from the demon's fearful way?
Forbid it, heaven! I see a champion rise
Before whose march the hated giant flies.
A radiant fairy from whose gleaming wings
Drips the bright spray drops of a thousand springs.
She comes from gushing streams that murmuring tell
Upon their banks blest Purity doth dwell.
No stricken land their gleaming waters lave,
Her name is Temperance, and she comes to save.
Fearless she battles with the god of Fire,
As did young David with the great Goliah.
And as victoriously she moves along,
I hear the rescued millions' triumph song,
I hear the mother's grateful blessings rise,
Borne on the wings of prayer beyond the skies,
I hear the father's shout, the brother's cheer,
I see the sister's joy-descending tear
And Hope exulting sings "Rum's slaves shall see
Emancipation's glorious jubilee." GEORGE M. BAKER.

LUCILLE'S MISTAKE.

THE visit over, bidding her adieu,
I took my hat, and bowing low, withdrew.
Then starting homeward, soon I missed my cane,
Retraced my steps, and rang the bell again.
I heard a rush; the door flew open wide;
And with a bound Lucille was at my side.
Around my neck her lovely arms she threw,
Kissed me, ye gods! she kissed me through and through.
Stock still I stood, not daring to return
The glowing kisses that my lips did burn.
I tried to speak, and gasped, "I clean forgot,
I left my cane." She started as if shot,
And cried with sobs she vainly tried to smother,
"Oh dear! I thought 'twas Dan, my brother.
What shall I do?" she asked me o'er and o'er.
I lacked the courage to say, "Do it more!"
So, looking sheepish, seized upon my stick,
And forthwith homeward trotted, double-quick.
When on my couch in vain I courted sleep,
I tossed; and pondered, "What a wealth of love
That girl possesses, other girls above!
And if a brother she should hold so dear,
How must a husband to her heart appear!"
The idea grew; and — well, to end the tale,
I sought her often, and to such avail
That, ere a twelvemonth its full course had run,
I woo'd, I won her; and we twain were one;
And once I told her "that my love began
The night she kissed me in mistake for Dan."
"For Dan!" said she: "why bless your stupid head,
Poor brother Dan was safe and snug in bed!"
"You didn't know it!" "Why, of course I did,"
And in my breast her blushing face she hid.

. . . . .

Through all these years, I did not once regret
My having fallen in the trap she set.
Happy am I, and happy, too, I've made her,
Although at times I laughingly upbraid her;
And then she says, "The moral, dear, of this is,
That girls don't often make mistakes — in kisses!"

AWKWARD.

And so she's engaged to be married
To one of our class! I'm afraid
That if very much longer she tarried
Her degree would be O. M.— Old Maid.
"I know her?" O, yes, or I thought so;
But I'm more than inclined to believe
I was wrong. I'm the fellow she sought so,
But couldn't deceive.

"You're surprised?" I imagined you would be,
It's a thing I say little about;
'Twas as open a case as well could be —
"Did she love me?" There wasn't a doubt.
Why, she just threw herself at my head, Bill!
But I knew she'd no heart and less brains;
And though money will settle a bread bill,
It won't wash off stains.

"You're astonished at this?" My dear fellow,
What the deuce did I care for her age!
I like women like apples — when mellow.
But the fact was, I knew every page
Of her history. "Flirted?" You'd think so.
There was Harry McKeown, sixty-three;
It was she that drove him to drink so.
"Am I sure?" As can be.

She's a scheming coquette, and I know it;
She hasn't the least bit of soul
Or an atom of truth. "Doesn't show it?"
No; her feelings are under control.
Then it's nonsense to say she has beauty,
I pity the fellow she's caught,
It must be a matter of duty
With him, or he's bought.

Who the deuce can it be? There's Fred Baker;
You remember him? — scored for the Nine;
But there isn't much fear he'd take her;
He wants blue blood, and not a gold mine.

"Chicken" Jones? No, he's married. 'Twas funny,
How he ran a tie race with Jim Prout,
For the "class cradle," wasn't it? Money
He's got, and the gout.

"Tub" Abbott was sweet on her. Sandy
McGillum! — he must be the one.
By Jove, it's old 'Sandy, the dandy!'
It's not he? I give up, then. I'm done.
Is it one of our class, are you sure,
That the vixen has seized for her prey?
Who's the fellow? let's have it! What! *you are*?
The dickens you say!

J. CHEEVER GOODWIN.

"THE BOYS WHO NEVER GOT HOME."

[From the Comrade who Couldn't attend the Camp-fire.]

I WOULD like to be there, and take the old soldiers by the hands, and look into the eyes that are becoming dim, and notice the effect of Father Time's pencillings on the faces of the boys, who twenty years ago were full of vitality and as kitteny as any man that ever kept step to the rattling of a canteen against a cartridge-box. Boys, do you realize that you are growing old? It is hard to realize it, but if another war were to break out your little baby that you left in its mother's arms twenty years ago, crowing at the "hand-me-down" blue uniform in which you were disguised, would be the chap the government would want. Boys, you are rapidly becoming "old back numbers;" though you feel young enough to stub round home, you are "exempt" now. Do you realize that the little baby girl that clung to you as you said good-by, twenty years ago, with tears in your eyes as big as a glass-paper weight, or an editor's diamond pin, is now a woman, married, and that another baby is trying to utter the word "grandpa," when you come in putting on your youthful airs? It is pleasant now to chase the festive bean around the home camp-fire and talk of the nights when you slept on the ground in a pup-tent, or on some battle-field, with your wet and muddy pantaloons-legs frozen as stiff as a dried codfish, while you dreamed that every

star that was looking down from above was the eye of a dear one at home beckoning you to "Hold the Fort," and hurry up and get through with the confounded foolishness and come home. You who are left have a right to be happy, but in the midst of your bean banquet let me ask you to stand up with your tin cup of black coffee, and drink to "The boys who never got home," the brave fellows who returned not to meet the loved ones they parted with twenty years ago. Let us hope that the great congress above "removed the disabilities" of the boys who left vacancies in their regiments, and that the few chickens they took in the way of business from the enemy will not be entered up against them on the Big Book, but that the Provost-Guard on duty at the gates of the New Jerusalem will "present arms" to them, and tell the boys that they are welcome to the best there is, and that when we all get in our work here, and are ready to join our regiment in Heaven, that the fellows we buried years ago may stand on the parapet as we come straggling in, and give us the old soldiers' welcome with a "three times three" and a tiger. And we shall say to them, "All right, comrades, we should have been here before, only we were detained by business."

GEORGE W. PECK.

TWO WAYS OF TELLING A STORY.

IN one of the most populous cities of New England, a few years since, a party of lads, all members of the same school, got up a grand sleigh-ride. There were about twenty-five or thirty boys engaged in the frolic. The sleigh was a very large and splendid *establishment*, drawn by six gray horses.

The afternoon was as beautiful as anybody could desire, and the merry group enjoyed themselves in the highest degree. It was a common custom of the school to which they belonged, and on previous occasions their teacher had accompanied them. Some engagement upon important business, however, occupying him, he was not at this time with them. It is quiet likely had it been otherwise that the restraining influence of his presence would have prevented the scene, which is the main feature of the present story.

On the day following the ride, as he entered the schoolroom, he found his pupils grouped about the stove, and in

high merriment, as they chatted about the fun and frolic of their excursion. He stopped a while and listened, and in answer to some inquiries which he made about the matter, one of the lads, a fine, frank, and manly boy, whose heart was in the right place, though his love of sport often led him astray, volunteered to give a narrative of their trip and its various incidents. As he drew near the end of his story, he exclaimed, "O sir! there was one little circumstance which I had almost forgotten to tell you. Toward the latter part of the afternoon, as we were returning home, we saw, at some distance ahead of us, a queer-looking affair in the road. We could not exactly make out what it was. It seemed to be a sort of half-and-half monstrosity. As we approached it, it proved to be a rusty old sleigh, fastened behind a covered wagon, proceeding at a very slow rate, and taking up the whole road. Finding that the owner was not disposed to turn out, we determined upon a volley of snowballs and a good hurrah. These we gave with a relish, and they produced the right effect, and a little more, for the crazy machine turned out into the deep snow, by the side of the road, and the skinny old pony started on a full trot. As we passed, some one who had the whip gave the old jilt of a horse a good crack which made him run faster than he ever did before, I'll warrant. And so, with another volley of snow-balls, pitched into the front of the wagon, and three times three cheers, we rushed by. With that, an *old fellow* in the wagon, who was buried up under an old hat and beneath a rusty cloak, and who had dropped the reins, bawled out, 'Why do you frighten my horse?'—'Why don't you turn out then?' says the driver. So we gave him three rousing cheers more; his horse was frightened again, and ran up against a loaded team, and, I believe, almost capsized the old creature — and so we left him."

"Well, boys," replied the instructor, "that is quite an incident. But take your seats, and after our morning service is ended, I will take my turn and tell you a story, and all about a sleigh-ride, too."

Having finished the reading of a chapter in the Bible, and after all had joined in the Lord's prayer, he commenced as follows: —

"Yesterday afternoon, a very venerable and respectable old man, and a clergyman by profession, was on his way from Boston to Salem, to pass the residue of the winter at

the house of his son. That he might be prepared for journeying, as he proposed to do in the spring, he took with him his light wagon, and for the winter, his sleigh, which he fastened behind the wagon. He was, just as I have told you, very old and infirm; his temples were covered with thinned locks, which the frosts of eighty years had whitened; his sight and hearing, too, were somewhat blunted by age, as yours will be, should you live to be as old. He was proceeding very slowly and quietly, for his horse was old and feeble, like his owner. His thoughts reverted to the scenes of his youth, when he had perilled his life, in fighting for the liberties of his country; to the scenes of his manhood, when he had preached the gospel of his divine Master to the heathen of the remote wilderness; and to the scenes of riper years, when the hard hand of penury had been laid heavily upon him. While thus occupied, almost forgetting himself in the multitude of his thoughts, he was suddenly disturbed, and even terrified, by loud hurrahs from behind, and by a furious pelting and clattering of balls of snow and ice upon the top of his wagon. In his trepidation he dropped his reins, and, as his aged and feeble hands were quite benumbed with cold, he found it impossible to gather them up, and his horse began to run away.

"In the midst of the old man's trouble, there rushed by him, with loud shouts, a large party of boys, in a sleigh drawn by six horses. 'Turn out, turn out, old fellow,'—'Give us the road, old boy,'—'What'll you take for your pony, old daddy?'—'Go it, frozen nose,'—'What's the price of oats?' were the various cries that met his ear.

"'Pray do not frighten my horse,' exclaimed the infirm driver.

"'Turn out, then; turn out,' was the answer, which was followed by repeated cracks and blows from the long whip of the 'grand sleigh,' with showers of snowballs, and three tremendous huzzas from the boys who were in it.

"The terror of the old man and his horse was increased, and the latter ran away with him, to the imminent danger of his life. He contrived, however, after some exertion, to secure his reins, which had been out of his hands during the whole of the affray, and to stop his horse just in season to prevent his being dashed against a loaded team.

"As he approached Salem, he overtook a young man who was walking toward the same place, and whom he invited

to ride. The young man alluded to the 'grand sleigh' which had just passed, which induced the old gentleman to inquire if he knew who the boys were. He replied that he did — that they all belonged to one school, and were a set of wild fellows.

"'Aha!' exclaimed the former with a hearty laugh (for his constant good nature had not been disturbed), 'do they, indeed! Why, their master is very well known to me. I am now going to his house, and I rather think I shall give him the benefit of this whole story.'

"A short distance brought him to his journey's end, the house of his son. His old horse was comfortably housed and fed, and he himself abundantly provided for.

"That son, boys, is your instructor; and that aged and infirm old man, that '*old fellow*' and '*old boy*' (who did not turn out for you, but who would have gladly given you the whole road, had he heard your approach), that '*old boy*,' and '*old daddy*,' and '*old frozen nose*,' was your master's father!"

It is not easy to describe, nor to imagine, the effect produced by this new translation of the boys' own narrative. Some buried their heads behind their desks; some cried; some looked askance at each other, and many hastened down to the desk of the teacher, with apologies, regrets, and acknowledgements without end. All were freely pardoned, but were cautioned that they should be more civil for the future to inoffensive travellers, and more respectful to the aged and infirm.

H. K. OLIVER.

MIKE McGAFFATY'S DOG.

MICHAEL MCGAFFATY — faith, what a name,
Was an Irishman born, and an Irishman bred.
His brogue was as broad as his brawny frame,
And his hands were as thick as his carroty head.

Mike had a wife who was Erin's true child,
Red-headed, big-fisted, and ugly was she;
Her features were fierce, and her nature not mild,
And she was as stupid as stupid could be.

And Mike had a dog, a bristling young terrier,
Quick at a fight, and not slow at a bone;
In the family-circle none could be merrier,
But he'd howl like a dervish when left all alone.

Mike lived in a hovel, untidy and small,
One room for two persons is found not too big:
Two persons, I said? Now, faith, that's not all,
For the cosiest corner was kept for the pig.

Now, with Mike, and his wife, and the pig and the dog,
While none disagreed, all was quiet and right;
But a quarrel arose, 'twixt the cur and the hog,
And one night they set to and indulged in a fight.

Then Biddy loud stormed, and louder Mike swore,
The pig squealed and grunted, the dog yelled like mad;
So to make everything quiet and peaceful once more,
Mike turned out the dog and then quiet was had.

But the dog was unused to the cold and the snow,
Did not take his ejectment quite in good part;
Not a step from the door would the ugly cur go,
But sat there and howled till the hut seemed to start.

Again Biddy loud stormed, and louder Mike swore,
While the pig sweetly slept, quite free from all care;
And Mike must get up from his slumbers once more,
To stop the wronged terrier's musical air.

He rushed to the doorway in anger and wrath,
Ne'er stopping for clothing, as quickly he bowled;
There sat the scared terrier right in his path,
Awakening the echoes as loudly he howled.

The door was banged to, leaving Biddy alone,
The howling was hushed and stillness restored;
Bolt upright sat Biddy, now Michael was gone,
While "in slumbers of midnight" the pig loudly snored.

So long was he gone that his spouse was alarmed,
She moved from her bed and peeped out at the door;
For rather than have her McGaffaty harmed,
She'd endure this dog's howling and that of ten more.

The moon glistens brightly on hillocks of snow,
And there, in a deep drift, stands Mike and the cur;
O'er his half-naked form the chilling winds blow,
Like a statue the dog stands, not daring to stir.

In wonder she gazes on human and brute,
Such a sight never met mortal eyes, I declare;
From Mike's ears and his nose long icicles stood,
While a small drift of snow rises white in his hair.

In the heart of fair Biddy anger is brewing,
And her shrilly pitched voice of panic doth smack;
"Mike! Mike! you big blackguard, what now be ye doing,
Sweating there in the could wid no coat to yer back?

Mike turned at the voice of his blooming young daisy,
While in shivering accents he answered in haste,
"Whist, Biddy! my darling, now can't yer be aisy,
Don't yer see what I'm doing? I'm frazing the baste."

"'Tis frazing the baste is it?" answered fair Biddy,
As into the hut she indignantly burst;
"If yer stay there much longer you'll leave me a widdy,
For in frazing the brute you will fraze yerself first."

MARK MELVILLE.

THE THREE LITTLE CHAIRS.

THEY sat alone by the bright wood fire,
The gray-haired dame and the aged sire,
Dreaming of days gone by;
The teardrops fell on each wrinkled cheek,
They both had thoughts they could not speak,
And each heart uttered a sigh.

For their sad and tearful eyes descried
Three little chairs placed side by side
Against the sitting-room wall,
Old-fashioned enough as there they stood,
Their seats of flag and their frames of wood,
With their backs so straight and tall.

Then the sire shook his silvery head,
And, with trembling voice, he gently said:
"Mother, these empty chairs!
They bring us such sad thoughts to-night
We'll put them forever out of sight
In the small, dark room up stairs."

But she answered, "Father, no; not yet;
For I look at them and I forget
That the children are away;
The boys come back, and our Mary, too,
With her apron on of checkered blue,
And sit there every day.

"Johnny still whittles a ship's tall masts,
And Willie his leaden bullets casts,
While Mary her patchwork sews;
At evening the three childish prayers
Go up to God from these little chairs
So softly that no one knows.

"Johnny comes back from the billow deep;
Willie wakes from the battle-field sleep
To say 'good-night' to me;
Mary's a wife and mother no more,
But a tired child whose play-time is o'er,
And comes to rest at my knee.

"So let them stand there, though empty now,
And every time when alone we bow
At the Father's throne to pray,
We'll ask to meet the children above
In our Saviour's home of rest and love,
Where no child goeth away."

MAKING LOVE IN THE CHOIR.

She sat on the steps of the organ loft,
Just after the second hymn;
And through nave and choir to the cool gray spire
The sound rose faint and dim,
As they settled themselves in the church below
For the sermon that followed next,
And I seated myself at the alto's side
As the parson took his text.

I marked the tender flush of her cheek,
And the gleam of her golden hair,
The snowy 'kerchief 'round her neck,
And her throat all white and bare;

A throat so white that indeed it might
An anchorite entice;
And I faintly heard the parson's word
As he preached of Paradise.

My arm stole gently around her waist
Until our fingers met,
And a flitting blush made the tender flush
Of her cheek grow deeper yet.
Snowy and fair the hand beneath,
And brown the palm above,
And the brown closed softly over the white
As the parson spoke of love.

Ah, who is wise when deep blue eyes
Meet his and look coyly down?
Who would but drink, nor care to think
Of envy's jealous frown?
'Twas but to bend till I felt her breath
Grow warm on her cheek, and then
My lips just softly touched her own
As the parson said "Amen!"

HOW DENNIS TOOK THE PLEDGE.

A LIMERICK Irishman named Dennis, addicted to strong drink, was often urged by his friends to sign the pledge, but with no avail, until one day they read to him from a newspaper an account of a man who had become so thoroughly saturated with alcohol, that, on attempting to blow out a candle, his breath ignited, and he was instantly blown to atoms. Dennis's face showed mingled horror and contrition, and his friends thought that the long-desired moment of repentance was at hand.

"Bring me the book, boys, bring me the book! Troth, his breath took foir, did it? Sure, I'll niver die that death, onyhow," said Dennis, with the most solemn countenance imaginable. "Hear me now, b'ys, hear me now. I, Dennis Finnegan, knowin' my great wakeness, deeply sinsible of my past sins, an' the great danger I've been in, hereby take me solemn oath, that, so long as I live, under no provocation whativer, will I — *blow out a candil agin!*"

JUDGE PITMAN'S WATCH.

JUDGE PITMAN has the habit of slipping his watch under his pillow when he goes to bed. The other night it slipped down, and as the Judge was restless it gradually worked its way downward to the foot of the bed. After a bit, while he was lying awake, his foot touched it, and as it felt cold, he was scared, and jumping from his bed he said: —

"By gracious, Maria! there's a toad, or a snake, or something under the covers, I touched it with my foot!"

Mrs. Pitman gave a loud scream, and was out on the floor in an instant.

"Now, don't go to hallooing and waking up the neighbors," said the Judge. "You go and get the broom, or something, and we'll fix this thing mighty quick."

Mrs. Pitman got the broom and gave it to the Judge, with the remark that she felt as if the snakes were creeping all up and down her legs and back.

"Oh, nonsense, Maria! Now turn down the covers slowly, while I hold the broom and bang it. Put a bucket of water on the side of the bed, too, so's we can shove it in and drown 'em."

Mrs. Pitman fixed the bucket and gently removed the covers. The Judge held the broom uplifted, and, as soon as the black ribbon of the watch was revealed, he cracked away three or four times with his broom. Then he pushed the thing off into the bucket. Then they took the bucket to the light to investigate the matter. When they saw what it was, he said: —

"I might have known that! Just like you women, to go screeching and making a fuss about nothing! Who's going to pay for that watch? It's utterly ruined."

"It was you who made the fuss, not me," said Mrs. Pitman. "You needn't try to put the blame off on me."

"Oh, hush up, and go to bed! I'm tired of hearing your blather. 'Pears to me you can't keep your tongue still a minute. Blame me if I ain't going to get a divorce and emigrate."

And the Judge turned in and growled at Maria until he fell asleep.

MAX ADELER.

AN ÆSTHETIC HOUSEKEEPER.

She was a graduate of Vassar, and when she married Julius Augustus Smythe, was very much like another young lady, who has been embalmed in song:—

> Miss Pallas Eudora von Blurkey,
> Who didn't know chicken from turkey,
> High Spanish and Greek she could fluently speak,
> But her knowledge of poultry was murky.

However, she told Julius Augustus that she was a good housekeeper because her mother and grandmother were, and it ran in the family. So, on the strength of this, he went to housekeeping. She bought a sweet, little, morocco-covered note-book and an embroidered market basket; and carried a gold pencil; wore an æsthetic morning costume, and appeared like a vision of delight before the magnates of the cleaver at the Central Market.

"Oh, the dear, sweet, cunning, little pigs," she exclaimed, stopping at an aldermanic stand, where several little roasters were on exhibition, "I'll take a couple of those; how much are they a pair?"

"Five dollars for two," was the realistic answer.

"Isn't that rather high? I guess I'll take a yard of beef-steak and a pound of chewing-gum instead, and some — ho, yes! — some sweetbreads. Julius said he wanted some nice, fresh ones, please, with plenty of raisins in them."

Then she sailed over to a poultry stall.

"Have you any chickens?" she asked of the woman in attendance.

"Heaps of 'em," was the reply.

"How much do they cost a heap?" she asked, in rather a faint voice.

"Half a dollar apiece, mem."

"Well, send up a piece to my residence." And she turned to the next stall and picked up some packages that looked very nice.

"What is that sweet stuff that smells so lovely?" she asked of a red-headed boy that stood behind the table.

"Limberger, miss; and it's just splendid; tastes so much better than it smells — have one?"

She took one, and then she asked the boy where they sold their quail on toast.

"Ain't any in the market," answered the young reprobate.

"Mother's gone after a load, though, and we'll send you some as soon as they are in."

"What are these navy-blue berries?" she inquired. "They will just match my china. You may send me a bushel."

Finally she decided to say a quart, which she carried herself in the artistic basket.

"Have you any hen fruit?" she asked, sweetly, of an old fellow in a white apron.

He scratched his ear with a pencil a moment. "Mabbe you mean heggs," he volunteered.

These she also took charge of, as she wanted to make an omelet for Julius Augustus.

But she never did, or rather, when she got home the omelet was made with a liberal admixture of blueberries, and the front of her æsthetic dress was ruined. Added to it was an odor that sent Julius into spasms, and frightened the cat to death — the Limberger had melted.

The Vassar girl did justice to high Spanish and Greek in the explanation that ensued, and the next day they burned the morocco note-book and went to boarding.

THE PUBLIC GRINDSTONE.*

THE public grindstone is a great institution, sir — yes, sir, a great institution. One of the greatest, perhaps, that ever rose, reigned, or fell. But, sir, there is too much private cutlery ground. The thing won't pay. Occasionally a big axe is brought in to be fixed up, ostensibly for the purpose of hewing down the gnarled trunks of errors, and clearing out the brushwood of ignorance and folly that obstructs the public highway of progress. The machine whirls; the axe is applied. The lookers-on are enchanted with the brilliant sparks elicited. The tool is polished, keenly edged, and, while the public stare in gaping expectancy of seeing the road cleared, the implement is slyly taken off to improve the private acres of some "faithful friend of the people." What is the result? The obstruction remains unmoved. The people curse because the car

* Extract from a speech by Gen. Riley in the House of Representatives of Missouri, Feb. 8, 1861.

lags — or, if it does move, 'tis at the expense of a broken wheel and a jaded and sore-backed team. I tell you the thing won't pay. The time will come when the nasal promontories of these disinterested grinders will be put to the stone, instead of their hardware. I am mighty afraid the machine is agoing to stop. The grease is giving out thundering fast. It is beginning to creak on its axis. Gentlemen, it is my private opinion, confidentially expressed, that all the grit is pretty near worn off.

Mr. Speaker, you must excuse me for my latitudinosity and circumlocutoriness. My old blunderbuss scatters amazingly; but if anybody gets peppered, it ain't my fault if they are in the way.

Sir, these dandadical, superquirtical, mahogany-faced gentry — what do they know about the blessings of freedom? about as much, sir, as a toad frog does of high glory. Do you think they can escape me? I'll follow them through pandemonium and high water!

These are the ones that have got our liberty-pole off its perpendicularity. 'Tis they who would rend the stars and stripes — that noble flag, the blood of our revolutionary fathers embalmed in its red; the purity of the cause for which they died denoted by the white; the blue — the freedom they attained, like the azure air that wraps their native hills and lingers on their lovely plains. The high bird of liberty sits perched on the topmost branch, but there is secession salt on his glorious tail. I fear he will no more spread his noble pinions to soar beyond the azure regions of the boreal pole. But let not Missouri pull the least feather from his sheltering wing to plume a shaft to pierce his noble breast; or, what is the same, make a pen to sign a secession ordinance. Alas! poor bird, if they drive you from the branches of the hemlock of the North, and the palmetto of the South, come over to the gum-tree of the West, and we will protect your noble birdship while water grows and grass runs. Mr. Speaker, I subside for the present.

THE POSTILION OF NAGOLD.

A STRANGER came to Nagold town
One stormy winter's day,
A queer old man with visage brown
And hair all streaked with gray —

A man of most forbidding ways;
His glance was shrewd and cold,
And all his looks and actions days
Of hard denial told.

He came at noon — the worthy dame
Who kept the inn — "The Bear" —
All vainly wondered whence he came,
Or what had brought him there.
He sat apart and eat his bread
And drank his pint of wine.
"I want a coach," at length he said,
"At three, for Adlerstein."

"For Adlerstein?" the dame replied
"'Tis three good hours away;
The mountain streams are deep and wide,
And waning is the day;
By daylight there is naught to fear.
Our hearth is warm and bright;
You'll find good cheer and comfort here,
Stay then and rest to-night."

"Ha! what care I for rain and sleet,
And perils you forbode,
With driver sure and horses fleet,
I do not fear the road."
The worthy hostess sighed, "Ah, me!
I'll not entreat him more."
And, as the village clock struck three,
The coach was at the door.

The driver was Postilion Dorn,
A lusty youth and true,
Whose notes upon the bugle-horn
Were known the Schwarzwald through;
And village maidens used to cast
Admiring glances down
Whenever he, with cheery blast,
Come dashing into town.

Full half an hour through mud and rain
The team had dashed along,
And Dorn had tried and tried again,
By merry jest and song,

And frequent words of cheer, to break
The silence so forlorn —
'Twas vain. "At least," thought he, "I'll wake
The echoes with a horn."

Then first a martial air he played —
An air that he had learned
In days when armies stood arrayed
And blazing camp-fires burned —
An air that told of battle's call,
Of carnage fierce and hot;
The stranger sat unmoved through all,
And seemed to hear it not.

"Aha!" quoth Dorn, "I'll try again."
Then, 'midst the rain and sleet,
He warbled forth a tender strain,
A love-song soft and sweet.
Through wind-tossed pines the plaintive lay
Its murmuring echoes woke;
Yet, when its music died away,
No word the stranger spoke.

Another hour in silence passed.
Each spectral bush and tree
Seemed mocking Dorn's despair. At last
"I'll try once more," said he,
Then, 'mid the blust'ring wintry gale,
In chorals grand and clear,
The "*Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele*"
Broke on the stranger's ear.

Its solemn notes the echoes woke
Through dim-lit forest aisles,
In sweet and pleading tones that spoke
Of Heaven and angels' smiles.
O'er every lonely mountain track
Its softened cadence stole,
And distant hillsides murmured back
"Oh! love the Lord, my soul."

Then to the stranger's raptured gaze
At that sweet hymn's command,
Came back the scenes of boyhood's days
Passed in that Suabian land —

His mother's love, his father's care,
And all the peace benign
That hovered round the hearthstone there
Long since at Adlerstein.

He saw the tree beneath whose shade
He used to sit and sing —
And where he'd plucked in sunny glade
Fresh violets in spring —
The cross-tipped spire, and, standing near,
The churchyard on the knoll,
And ever sounding in his ear,
"Oh! love the Lord, my soul."

The tears burst forth — he meekly bowed
His head upon his hand;
"God bless you now," he sobbed aloud,
"This is my native land.
I've wandered from it far abroad.
O'er mountain, seas and plain,
My soul, indeed, doth love the Lord
Who brings me home again."

Postilion Dorn has now grown old,
Grandchildren round him play,
And he full oft, I wot, has told
How well he played that day.
Let's hope, in age, for memory's sake
Some brave Postilion Dorn
For us, in turn, such notes may wake
Upon his bugle horn.

GEORGE L. CATLIN.

PEGGING AWAY.

THERE was an old shoemaker, sturdy as steel,
Of great wealth and repute in his day,
Who, if questioned his secret of luck to reveal,
Would chirp like a bird on a spray:
"It isn't so much the vocation you're in,
Or liking for it," he would say,
"As it is that smartly, through thick and through thin,
You should ever keep pegging away."

I have found it a maxim of value whose truth
  Observation has proved in the main,
And which might well be vaunted a watchword by youth,
  In the labor of hand and of brain;
For if genius and talent are cast
  Into work with the strongest display,
You can never be sure of achievement at last,
  Unless you keep pegging away.

There are shopmen who might into statesmen have grown,
  Politicians for handiwork made;
Some poets who better in shops had shone,
  And mechanics best suited for trade;
But when once in the harness, however it fit,
  Buckle down to your work night and day,
Secure in the triumph of hand and of wit,
  If you only keep pegging away.

There are times in all tasks when the fiend Discontent
  Advises a pause or a change,
And, on field far away and irrelevant bent,
  The purpose is tempted to range:
Never heed, but in sound recreation restore
  Such traits as are slow to obey;
And then, more persistent and staunch than before,
  Keep pegging and pegging away.

Leave fitful endeavors for such as would cast
  Their spendthrift existence in vain,
For the secret of wealth, in the present and past,
  And of fame, and of honor, is plain;
It lies not in change, nor in sentiment nice,
  Nor in wayward exploit and display,
But just in the shoemaker's honest advice,
  To keep pegging and pegging away.

KATIE'S ANSWER.

Och, Katie's a rogue, it is thrue,
But her eyes, like the sky, are so blue,
  An' her dimples so swate,
  An' her ankles so nate,
She dazed, an' she bothered me, too.

Till one mornin' we wint for a ride,
Whin,' demure as a bride, by my side
The darlint, she sat,
Wid the wickedest hat
Neath purty girl's chin iver tied.

An' my heart, arrah, thin how it bate!
For my Kate looked so temptin' an' swate,
Wid cheeks like the roses,
An' all the red posies
That grow in her garden so nate.

But I sat just as mute as the dead,
Till she said wid a toss of her head,
"If I'd known that to-day
Ye'd have nothing to say,
I'd have gone wid my cousin, instead."

Thin I felt myself grow very bowld
For I knew she'd not scold if I towld
Uv the love in my heart,
That would never depart,
Though I lived to be wrinkled and old.

An' I said: "If I dared to do so,
I'd lit go uv the baste, and I'd throw
Both arms round her waist,
An' be stalin' a taste
Uv them lips that are coaxin' me so."

Thin she blushed a more illegent red
As she said, without raisin' her head,
An' her eyes lookin down
Neath her lashes so brown,
"Would ye like me to drive, Misther Ted?"

THE ENOCH OF CALAVERAS.

"Well, dog my cats! Say, stranger,
You must have travelled far!
Just flood your lower level
And light a fresh cigar.

Don't tell me in this weather!
  You hoofed it all the way?
Well, slice my liver lengthwise!
  Why, stranger, what's to pay?

"Huntin' yer wife, you tell me:
  Well, now dog-gone my skin!
She thought you dead and buried
  And then bestowed her fin
Upon another fellow!
  Just put it here, old pard!
Some fellows strike the soft things,
  But you have hit it hard.

"I'm right onto your feelin's,
  I know how it would be,
If my own shrub slopped over
  And got away from me.
Say, stranger; that old sage hen,
  That's cookin' thar inside,
Is warranted the finest wool,
  And just a square yard wide.

"I wouldn't hurt yer, pardner,
  But I tell *you*, no man
Was ever blessed as I am
  With that old pelican.
It's goin' on some two year
  Since she was j'ined to me,
She was a widder prior,
  Her name was Sophy Lee—

"Good God! Old man, what's happened?
  Her?- She? Is that the one?
That's her? Your wife, you tell me?
  Now reach down fer yer gun,
I never injured no man,
  And no man me, but squealed,
And any one who takes her
  Must do it d—d well heeled!

"Listen? Surely. Certainly
  I'll let you look at her.
Peek through the door, she's in thar,
  Is that your furnitur' ?

Speak, man, quick! You're mistaken!
No! Yours! You recognize
My wife, your wife the same one?
The man who says so, lies!

"Don't mind what I say, pardner,
I'm not much on the gush,
But this thing comes down on me
Like fours upon a flush.
If that's your wife — hold — steady!
That bottle. Now, my coat,
She'll think me dead as you were.
My pipe. Thar. I'm afloat.

"But let me leave a message.
No; tell her that I died,
No, no; not that way, either,
Just tell her that I cried.
It don't rain much. Now, pardner,
Be to her what I've been.
Or by the God that hates you,
You'll see me back again!"

F. BRET HARTE.

AN IDEAL OF WOMAN.*

IT is not bards and artists merely that have an ideal of woman. There is a season in the experience of every man, when woman is a dream, a vision, gleaming around with light and promise. Everything in man which is finest, purest, noblest, goes to enrich and decorate this ideal. It is enshrined, guarded with reverent care, and silently worshipped in the sanctuary of thought. And while it is so worshipped, it makes a poet of him with whom it dwells. The ploughboy in the furrow, the shepherd on the hill, the mechanic at his bench, the sailor in the shrouds, the soldier in the camp, — each in his season has the dream, and glories in it. He has his offerings and his tributes to it also. He has, in his own way, his songs, and tales, and passionate imaginings. It is inspiring

* From HUMAN LIFE IN SHAKESPEARE. Published by Lee and Shepard, Boston.

and regenerating. It calls up the sleeping faculties; it arouses fancy in the stupid; it softens the awkward into grace; it loosens the tongue of the stammering; it lends to the most rustic speech persuasiveness and eloquence; it changes natures which were hopelessly barbarous, represses sensualities, and raises even savages to purity; it gives joy, but also it gives sorrow; and beings who had scarcely known life in its ordinary capacities, come to know it in the utmost depths of its tragedy; it renders even the mean heroic, fills them with self-respect, and strengthens to self-denial. Ambitious men, in their career of aspiration and success, often recall these thoughts only to smile them away; but this is a false dignity; for out from this vision of youth may have come the flame which shown upon their path to greatness, and out from the dream of the boy may have come the power of the man. Idealism is the light of passion; passion is the force of life. This idealism is a vision, and the vision is a prophecy. Woman is the interpretation of the vision, the fulfilment of the prophecy. So she is in the economy of nature; so she is in the experience of life; so she is in the poetry of Shakespeare.

HENRY GILES.

A BAD MIX.

IT was one day in the early history of Detroit that John Snow was born. He would probably have weighed nine pounds if there had been any scales in the territory to weigh him on. As there was no way to weigh him he went his way unweighed.

When John Snow had crawled over the pioneer logs, rolled in the mud and eaten Johnny-cake until he was fourteen years old, his mother died. If his father had been like some men he would have put a weed on his hat, engaged a cheap housekeeper, and continued business at the old stand without any interruption. But he wasn't like some men. He married a cousin who had two or three children big enough to fight John, and so the boy's aunt became his mother, and his father became his uncle.

In due time John Snow had a sister. No, he hadn't either. It was a girl, but he didn't know whether she was

a step-sister, or a cousin, or a half-sister. Some said that the girl would be his grandmother if she lived long enough, and he was almost discouraged. In about two years more a boy was born, and John figured and figured until he made out that he was a half-uncle to his step-brother, and that his step-brother was his own uncle.

While John was off on a fishing excursion at Lake Superior, one of his half-brothers married, and John came home to find another baby. He wanted to know what relation he was to this youngster, and he marked the fence all over with chalk and could not come to any satisfactory conclusion. It rather seemed to him that he was a quarter-brother or a step-uncle, but there was the fact staring him in the face that the child's step-uncle was also its step-grandfather, and it might be its own cousin for all he could make out.

For two or three years John Snow moped around the Indians and fur-buyers, and then in a fit of desperation married one of his aunt-step-mother's daughters, and became brother-in-law to his cousin-half-brother, son-in-law to his aunt-step-mother, and the same to his father-step-uncle. He might have lived on and been happy if the public had let him alone, but school-teachers went on and made out that he was his uncle's aunt and step-mother's grandfather, and that he was no relation to himself, and he pined away and died.

It isn't a great big four-story, with a basement and bronze trimmings; but John Snow's weather-beaten tombstone was unearthed at the Detroit eastern hay-market by some diggers Saturday, and it is well that his fate be known.

ASLEEP AT THE SWITCH.

THE first thing that I remember was Carlo tugging away,
With the sleeve of my coat fast in his teeth, pulling, as much as to say:
"Come, master, awake, and tend to the switch; lives now depend upon you.
Think of the souls in the coming train and the graves you're sending them to;
Think of the mother, and babe at her breast, think of the father and son,

Think of the lover and loved one, too, think of them,
doomed every one
To fall, as it were, by your very hand, into yon fathomless
ditch,
Murdered by one who should guard them from harm, who
now lies asleep at the switch."

I sprang up amazed, scarce knew where I stood, sleep had
o'ermastered me so;
I could hear the wind hollowly howling, and the deep
river dashing below;
I could hear the forest leaves rustling as the trees by the
tempest were fanned;
But what was that noise at a distance? That — I could not
understand!
I heard it first indistinctly, like the rolling of some muffled
drum,
Then nearer and nearer it came to me, and made my
very ears hum;
What is this light that surrounds me and seems to set fire
to my brain?
What whistle's that yelling so shrilly? Oh, God! I know
now — it's the train.

We often stand facing some danger, and seem to take root
to the place;
So I stood with this demon before me, its heated breath
scorching my face,
Its headlight made day of the darkness, and glared like the
eyes of some witch;
The train was almost upon me before I remembered the
switch.
I sprang to it, seizing it wildly, the train dashing fast down
the track,
The switch resisted my efforts, some devil seemed holding
it back;
On, on came the fiery-eyed monster, and shot by my face
like a flash;
I swooned to the earth the next moment, and knew nothing
after the crash.

How long I lay there unconscious were impossible for me
to tell;
My stupor was almost a heaven, my waking almost a hell —

For I then heard the piteous moaning and shrieking of
husbands and wives,
And I thought of the day we all shrink from, when I must
account for their lives;
Mothers rushed by me like maniacs, their eyes staring
madly and wild;
Fathers, losing their courage, gave way to their grief like
a child;
Children searching for parents, I noticed, as by me they
sped,
And lips that could form naught but "mamma" were call-
ing for one perhaps dead.

My mind was made up in a second — the river should hide
me away;
When, under the still burning rafters, I suddenly noticed
there lay
A little white hand; she who owned it was doubtless an
object of love
To one whom her loss would drive frantic, though she
guarded him now from above;
I tenderly lifted the rafters, and quietly laid them one side;
How little she thought of her journey when she left for this
last fatal ride;
I lifted the last log from off her, and while searching for
some spark of life,
Turned her little face up in the starlight, and recognized —
Maggie, my wife!

Oh, Lord! Thy scourge is a hard one! At a blow Thou
hast shattered my pride;
My life will be one endless night-time with Maggie away
from my side;
How often we've sat down and pictured the scenes in our
long, happy life;
How I'd strive through all of my lifetime to build up a
home for my wife.
How people would envy us always in our cozy and neat
little nest,
When I would do all the labor and Maggie should all the
day rest;
How one of God's blessings might cheer us when some day
I perhaps should be rich —
But all of my dreams have been shattered while I lay there
asleep at the switch.

I fancied I stood on my trial; the jury and judge I could see,
And every eye in the court-room was steadfastly fixed upon me;
And fingers were pointed in scorn, till I felt my face blushing blood-red,
And the next thing I heard were the words, "Hung by the neck until dead."
Then I felt myself pulled once again, and my hand caught tight hold of a dress,
And I heard, "What's the matter, dear Jim? You've had a bad nightmare, I guess."
And there stood Maggie, my wife, with never a scar from the ditch —
I'd been taking a nap in my bed, and had not been asleep at the switch.

GEORGE HOEY.

MONEY MUSK.

IN shirt of check, and tallowed hair,
The fiddler sits in the bulrush chair,
Like Moses' basket stranded there
On the brink of Father Nile.
He feels the fiddle's slender neck,
Picks out the notes with thrum and check,
And times the tune with nod and beck,
And thinks it a weary while.

All ready! Now he gives the call,
Cries "*Honor to the ladies!*" All
The jolly tides of laughter fall
And ebb in a happy smile.

D-O-W-N comes the bow on every string,
"*First couple join right hands and swing!*"
And light as any bluebird's wing
"*Swing once and a half times round!*"
Whirls Mary Martin all in blue —
Calico gown and stockings new,
And tinted eyes that tell you true.
Dance all to the dancing sound.

She flits about big Moses Brown,
Who holds her hands to keep her down,
And thinks her hair a golden crown,
And his heart turns over once!
His cheek with Mary's breath is wet,
It gives a second somerset!
He means to win the maiden yet,
Alas, for the awkard dunce!

"Your stoga boot has crushed my toe!
I'd rather dance with one-legged Joe.
You clumsy fellow!" "*Pass below!*"
And the first pair dance apart,
Then "*Forward six!*" advance, retreat,
Like midges gay in sunbeam street;
'Tis Money Musk by merry feet
And the Money Musk by heart!

"*Three-quarters round your partner swing!*
Across the set!" The rafters ring,
The girls and boys have taken wing,
And have brought their roses out!
'Tis "*Forward six!*" With rustic grace,
Ah, rarer far than — "*Swing to place!*"
Than golden clouds of old point-lace,
They bring the dance about.

Then clasping hands all — "*Right and left!*"
All swiftly weave the measure deft
Across the woof in living weft,
And the Money Musk is done!
Oh, dancers of the rustling husk,
Good-night, sweethearts, 'tis growing dusk,
Good-night for aye to Money Musk,
For the heavy march begun!

B. F. TAYLOR

PAT AND THE PIG.

WE have read of a Pat so financially flat,
That he had neither money nor meat,
And when hungry and thin, it was whispered by sin,
That he ought to steal something to eat.

So he went to the sty of a widow near by,
And he gazed on the tenant — poor soul!
"Arrah now," said he, "what a trate that'll be,"
And the pig of the widow he stole.

In a feast he rejoiced; then he went to a judge,
For in spite of the pork and the lard,
There was something within, that was sharp as a pin.
For his conscience was pricking him hard.

And he said with a tear, "Will your Riverence hear
What I have in sorrow to say?"
Then the story he told, and the TALE did unfold
Of the pig he had taken away.

And the judge to him said, "Ere you go to your bed
You must pay for the pig you have taken,
For 'tis thus, by me sowl, you'll be saving your sowl,
And will also be saving your bacon."

"Oh, be jabers," said Pat, "I can niver do that —
Not the ghost of a hap'orth have I —
And I'm wretched indade if a penny it nade
Any pace for me conscience to buy."

Then in sorrow he cried, and the judge he replied,
"Only think how you'll tremble with fear
When the judge you shall meet at the great judgment seat,
And the widow you plundered while here."

"Will the widow be there?" whispered Pat with a stare,
"And the pig? by my sowl, is it true?"
"They will surely be there," said the judge, "I declare,
And, oh Paddy! what then will you do?"

"Many thanks," answered Pat, "for you telling me that,
May the blessings upon you be big!
On that settlemint day, to the widow I'll say,
Mrs. Flannegan, here is your pig!"

SCENE FROM LEAH THE FORSAKEN.

CHARACTERS.

LEAH — *A Jewish Maiden.*

RUDOLF — *The Magistrate's Son.*

SCENE. — *The Churchyard behind the Village Church.*

Enter LEAH, *slowly, from* L., *her hair streaming over her shoulders.*

LEAH. (*solus*). What seek I here! I know not; yet I feel I have a mission to fulfil. I feel that the cords of my soul are stretched to their utmost effort. Already seven days! So long! As the dead lights were placed about the body of Abraham, as the friends sat nightly at his feet and watched (*slowly sinking down*), so have I sat for seven days, and wept over the corpse of my love! (*with painful intensity*). What have I done? Am I not a child of man? Is not love the right of all — like the air, the light? And if I stretched my hands towards it, was it a crime? When I first saw him — first heard the sound of his voice, something wound itself around my heart. Then first I knew why I was created, and for the first time was thankful for my life (*laying her hand on her brow*). Collect thyself, mind, and think! What has happened? I saw him yesterday — no! eight days ago! He was full of love. "You'll come," said he. I came. I left my people. I tore the cords that bound me to my nation, and came to him. He cast me forth into the night. And yet, my heart, you throb still. The earth still stands, the sun still shines, as if it had not gone down forever for me. (*low*) By his side stood a handsome maiden, and drew him away with caressing hands. It is her he loves, and to the Jewess he dares offer gold. (*starting up*) I will seek him! I will gaze on his face — (*church lit up, windows illuminated, organ heard soft*) that deceitful, beautiful face. I will ask him what I have done that — (*hides her head in her hands and weeps, organ swells louder and then subsides again to low music*) Perhaps he has been misled by some one — some false tongue! His looks, his words seem to reproach me. Why was I silent? Thou proud mouth, ye proud lips, why did you not speak? (*exultingly*) Perhaps he loves me still. Perhaps his soul,

like mine, pines in nameless agony, and yearns for reconciliation. (*Music soft*) Why does my hate melt away at this soft voice with which heaven calls me. That grand music. (*listening*) I hear voices, it sounds like a nuptial benediction; perhaps it is a loving bridal pair. (*clasping her hands and raising them on high*) Amen — amen! to that benediction, whoever you may be. (*Music stops*) I, poor desolate one, would like to see their happy faces — I must — this window. Yes, here I can see into the church. (*goes to window, looks in, screams and comes down — speaks very fast*) Do I dream? Kind Heaven, that prayer, that amen, you heard it not. I call it back. You did not hear my blessing. You were deaf. Did no blood-stained dagger drop down upon them? 'Tis he! Revenge! (*throws off her mantle, disclosing white robe beneath — bares her arm, and rushes to the little door — but halts*) No. Thou shalt judge! Thine, Jehovah, is the vengeance. Thou alone canst send it. (*Stands beside broken column, rests her left arm upon it, letting the other fall by her side.*)

Enter RUDOLF *from the little door of the church, with rose wreath in his hand.*

RUD. I am at last alone. I cannot endure the joy and merriment around me. How like mockery sounded the pious words of the priest. As I gazed towards the church windows, I saw a face, heard a muffled cry, I thought it was her face, her voice.

LEAH. (*coldly*) Did you think so?

RUD. Leah! Is it you?

LEAH. Yes.

RUD. (*tenderly*) Leah ——

LEAH. (*with a gesture of contempt*) Silence, perjured one! Can the tongue that lied still speak? The breath that called me wife now swear faith to another? Does it dare to mix with the pure air of heaven? Is this the man I worshipped? whose features I so fondly gazed upon? Ah! (*shuddering*) No — no! The hand of heaven has crushed, beaten, and defaced them! The stamp of divinity no longer rests there! (*walks away.*)

RUD. Leah! hear me!

LEAH. (*turning fiercely*) Ha! You call me back? I am pitiless now.

RUD. You broke faith first. You took the money.

LEAH. Money! What money?

RUD. The money my father sent you.

LEAH. Sent me money! For what?

RUD. (*hesitating*) To induce you to release me — to ——

LEAH. That I might release you. And you knew it. You permitted it.

RUD. I staked my life that you would not take it.

LEAH. And you believed I had taken it!

RUD. How could I believe otherwise? I ——

LEAH. (*with rage*) And you believed I had taken it. Miserable Christian, and you cast me off! Not a question was the Jewess worth, (*subdued but vindictive*) This, then, was thy work: this the eternity of love which you promised me. (*falling on her knees*) Forgive me, heaven, that I forget my nation to love this Christian. Let that love be lost in hate. Love is false, unjust — hate, endless, eternal.

RUD. Cease these gloomy words of vengeance — I have wronged you. I feel it without your reproaches. I have sinned, but to sin is human, and it would be but human to forgive.

LEAH. You would tempt me again? I do not know that voice.

RUD. I will make good the evil I have done; ay, an hundredfold.

LEAH. (*bitterly*) Ay, crush the flower, grind it under foot, then make good the evil you have done. (*fiercely*) No, no! An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a heart for a heart!

RUD. Hold, fierce woman, I will beseech no more! Do not tempt heaven, let it be the judge between us! If I have sinned through love, see that you do not sin through hate.

LEAH. Blasphemer! and you dare call on heaven! What commandment hast thou not broken? Thou shalt not swear falsely — you broke faith with me! Thou shalt not steal — you stole my heart. Thou shalt not kill — what of life have you left me?

RUD. (*advances towards her*) Hold, hold! No more.

LEAH. (*repelling him*) The old man who died because I loved you, the woman who hungered because I followed you; the infant who died of thirst because of you; may they follow you in dreams, and be a drag upon your feet forever. May you wander as I wander, suffer shame as I now suffer it. Cursed be the land you till, may it keep faith with you, as you kept faith with me! Cursed be the unborn fruit of thy marriage! may it wither as my young heart has

withered; and should it ever see the light, may its brows be blackened by the mark of Cain, and may it vainly pant for nourishment on its dying mother's breast! (*snatching the wreath from his uplifted hand*) Cursed, thrice cursed may you be evermore, and as my people on Mount Ebal spoke, so speak I thrice, Amen! Amen! Amen!

(RUDOLF, *who has been standing, as if petrified, drops on his knees.*)

THE NIGHT AFTER CHRISTMAS.

'TWAS the night after Christmas, when all through the house
Every soul was abed, and still as a mouse;
The stockings, so lately St. Nicholas' care,
Were emptied of all that was eatable there,
The darlings had duly been tucked in their beds,
With very full stomachs and pains in their heads.
I was dozing away in my new cotton cap,
And Nancy was rather far gone in a nap,
When out in the nursery rose up such a clatter,
I sprang from my sleep, crying, "What is the matter?"
I flew to each bedside, still half in a doze,
Tore open the curtains, and threw off the clothes,
While the light of the taper served clearly to show
The piteous plight of those objects below;
For what to the father's fond eye should appear
But the little pale face of each sick little dear,
For each pet that had crammed itself full as a tick,
I knew in a moment now felt like old Nick.
Their pulses were rapid, their breathings the same;
What their stomachs ejected I'll mention by name:
Now turkey, now stuffing, plum-pudding, of course,
And custards, and crullers, and cranberry sauce,
Before outraged Nature, all went to the wall;
Yes, lollypops, flapdoddle, dinner, and all.
Like pellets which urchins from popguns let fly,
Went figs, nuts, and raisins, jams, jelly, and pie,
Till each error of diet was brought to my view,
To the shame of mamma and of Santa Claus, too.

I turned from the sight, to my bedroom stepped back,
And brought out a vial marked "Pulv. Ipecac;"
When my Nancy exclaimed, for their sufferings shocked her,
"Don't you think you had better, love, run for the doctor?"
I ran, and was scarcely back under my roof,
When I heard the sharp clatter of Jalap's hoof;
I might say that I hardly had turned myself round,
When the doctor came into the room with a bound;
He was covered with mud from his head to his foot,
And the suit he had on was his very best suit;
He had hardly time to put that on his back,
And he looked like a flagstaff half-fuddled with sack.
His eyes how they twinkled! Had the doctor got merry?
His cheeks looked like *port*, and his breath smelt of *sherry*;
He hadn't been shaved for a fortnight or so,
And the beard on his chin wasn't white as the snow.
But inspecting their tongues in spite of their teeth,
And drawing his watch from his waistcoat beneath,
He felt each pulse, saying, "each little belly
Must get rid"—here he laughed—"of the rest of that jelly."
I gazed on each chubby, plump, sick little elf,
And groaned when he said so in spite of myself;
But a wink of his eye when he physicked our Fred,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He didn't prescribe, but went straightway to his work,
And dosed all the rest, gave his trousers a jerk,
And adding directions while blowing his nose,
He buttoned his coat, from his chair he arose,
Then jumped in his gig, gave old Jalap a whistle,
And Jalap dashed off as if pricked by a thistle;
But the doctor exclaimed, ere he drove out of sight,
"They'll be well by to-morrow—good-night, Jones, good-night."

"NORVAL."

On a pine woodshed, in an alley dark, where scattered moonbeams flitting through a row of tottering chimneys, and an awning torn and drooping fell, strode back and forth, with stiffened and tense-drawn muscle and peculiar tread—a cat.

His name was Norval; on yonder neighboring shed his father fought the cats that came in squads from streets beyond, in search of food and strange adventure.

Grim war he courted; and his twisted tail, and spine upheaving in fantastic curve, and claws distended, and ears pressed against a head thrown back defiantly, told of impending strife.

With eyes agleam, and screeching blast of war, and steps as the fallen dew, young Norval crept along the splintered edge, and gazed a moment through the darkness down, with tail a-wag triumphantly.

Then with an imprecation and a growl — perhaps an oath, in direst vengeance hissed — he started back, and crooked in body like a letter U inverted, stood in fierce expectancy.

'Twas well. With eyeballs glaring, and ears all aslant, and open mouth, in which two rows of fangs stood forth in sharp and dread conformity, slow up a post, from out the dark below, a head appeared.

A dreadful tocsin of determined strife young Norval uttered; then with face unblanched, and mustache standing straight before his nose, and tail flung wildly to the passing breeze, stepped back in cautious invitations to the foe.

Approaching the other, and with preparations dire, each cat surveyed the vantage of the field. Around they walked, with tails uplifted in the air, while from their mouths, in accents hissing with consuming rage, dropped brief but awful sentences of hate.

Thrice around the roof they moved in circle, each with eye upon the foe intently bent; then sideways moving, as is wont with cats, gave one long-drawn, terrific, savage yaw, and buckled in.

The fur flew. A mist of hair hung over the battle-field, High above the din of passing wagons rose the dreadful tumult of struggling cats. So gleamed their eyes in frenzy that to me, who saw the conflict from a window near, naught else was plain but fiery stars that moved in orbits most eccentric.

An hour they struggled in tempestuous might, then faint and fainter grew the squall of war, until all sound was hushed. Then went I forth with lantern, and the field surveyed. What saw I?

Six claws — one ear — of teeth, perhaps a handful — and,

save fur, naught else except a solitary tail. That tail was Norval's — by a ring I knew it. The ear was —— But we'll let the matter rest. The tail will do without the ear.

THE OLD KNIGHT'S TREASURE.

Sir John was old, and grim, and gray;
The cares of sixty years he bore;
The charm of youth had withered away
From his iron features long before.
In his dull old house of blackened stone,
With servants quaint, and tried, and few,
For many a year he had lived alone,
As the harsh, and the cold, and the heartless do.

There was plate on his sideboard — plate of price;
His pouch had ruddy gold at need;
And twenty men might well suffice
The lands he held by dower and deed.
He had lived, the world said, much too long;
sold his heart for wealth and power;
An . ules, they thought, of bygone wrong
Would be wailed, too late, at his dying hour.

Beside the bed of grim Sir John —
The quaint old faded bed of state,
Where, in the centuries dead and gone,
Had slept gray heads with a diadem's weight —
Beside his bed and near at hand
To his easy-chair of oaken wood,
Fastened and strapped with bar and band,
A huge black casket ever stood.

No friend of his — they were far and few —
Had ever seen the open lid;
Not even the tongue of a servant knew
What thing of wealth the casket hid.
'Twas rumored that at dead of night,
When shut and barred were window and door,
It opened to the old man's sight;
But that was rumor, nothing more.

Eyes glanced upon it, quick and keen,
And minds with doubt impatient swelled;
What could these years of mystery mean?
What could be the wealth the casket held?
'Twas wonderful wealth, — so much knew all;
For these bold words the covering crossed:
'Remember, all, if harm befall,
Save *this*, whatever else is lost!"

Perhaps the red gold nestled there,
Loving and close as in the mine;
Or diamonds lit the sunless air,
Or rubies blushed like bridal wine.
Some giant gem, like that which bought
The half of a realm in Timour's day,
Might here, beyond temptation's thought,
Be hidden in safety; who could say?

Sir John was dead. The needy heirs
Followed close and thick behind his bier,
Blending disgust at the tedious prayers,
With a proper sob and a decorous tear.
And scarce the sound of feet had died,
Closing the vault for his mouldering rest,
When rung the chisel, opening wide
That strange old guarded treasure-chest.

What found they? Faces darkened and frowned,
And curses smothered under the breath,
As the heavy lid was at last unbound,
And the heirs expectant looked beneath.
Not an acre, not a banquet more,
Would all the wealth of the casket buy!
No wonder their faces this anger wore,
That curled the lip and flashed the eye.

What found they? Top, and whip, and ball,
And knife, and cord, — each veriest toy
That makes, through years of childhood, all
The merrier life of the bright-eyed boy!
For thirty years that lonely man
Had held, oh, dearer than honors won, —
Than the wealth that into his coffers ran, —
The toys of his buried baby son!

O human love! O human grief!
Ye make your places wide and far!
Ye rustle in every withered leaf,
Ye are heard, perhaps, where the angels are!
In the coldest life may rise some wail,
O'er broken hopes and memories fond:
God help us, when we set the pale
That leaves one human heart beyond.

HENRY MORFORD.

THE DISCONTENTED PENDULUM.

AN old clock, that had stood for fifty years in a farmer's kitchen, without giving its owner any cause of complaint, early one summer's morning, before the family was stirring, suddenly stopped. Upon this, the dial-plate (if we may credit the fable) changed countenance with alarm; the hands made a vain effort to continue their course; the wheels remained motionless with surprise; the weights hung speechless; each member felt disposed to lay the blame on the others. At length the dial instituted a formal inquiry as to the cause of the stagnation, when hands, wheels, weights, with one voice protested their innocence.

But now a faint tick was heard below from the pendulum, who thus spoke: "I confess myself to be the sole cause of the present stoppage; and I am willing, for the general satisfaction, to assign my reasons. The truth is, that I am tired of ticking." Upon hearing this, the old clock became so enraged that it was on the very point of *striking*.

"Lazy wire!" exclaimed the dial-plate, holding up its hands. "Very good!" replied the pendulum, "it is vastly easy for you, Mistress Dial, who have always, as everybody knows, set yourself up above me — it is vastly easy for you, I say, to accuse other people of laziness! — you, who have had nothing to do all the days of your life, but to stare people in the face, and to amuse yourself with watching all that goes on in the kitchen! Think, I beseech you, how you would like to be shut up for life in this dark closet, and to wag backwards and forwards, year after year, as I do."

"As to that," said the dial, "is there not a window in your house on purpose for you to look through?" "For all that," resumed the pendulum, "it is very dark here; and

although there is a window, I dare not stop, even for an instant, to look out at it. Besides, I am really tired of my way of life; and if you wish, I'll tell you how I took this disgust at my employment. I happened this morning to be calculating how many times I should have to tick in the course of only the next twenty-four hours; perhaps some of you, above there, can give me the exact sum."

The minute-hand, being *quick* at figures, presently replied, "Eighty-six thousand four hundred times." "Exactly so," replied the pendulum; "well, I appeal to you all, if the very thought of this was not enough to fatigue one; and when I began to multiply the strokes of one day by those of months and years, really it is no wonder if I felt discouraged at the prospect; so, after a great deal of reasoning and hesitation, thinks I to myself I'll stop."

The dial could scarcely keep its countenance during this harangue; but resuming its gravity, thus replied: "Dear Mr. Pendulum, I am really astonished that such a useful, industrious person as yourself should have been overcome by this sudden action. It is true you have done a great deal of work in your time; so have we all, and are likely to do; which, although it may fatigue us to *think* of, the question is, whether it will fatigue us to *do*. Would you now do me the favor to give about half a dozen strokes to illustrate my argument?"

The pendulum complied, and ticked six times in its usual pace. "Now," resumed the dial, "may I be allowed to inquire if that exertion was at all fatiguing or disagreeable to you?" "Not in the least," replied the pendulum, "it is not of six strokes that I complain, nor of sixty, but of *millions*." "Very good," replied the dial; "but recollect, that though you may *think* of a million strokes in an instant, you are required to *execute* but one; and that, however often you may hereafter have to swing, a moment will always be given you to swing in." "That consideration staggers me, I confess,' said the pendulum. "Then I hope," resumed the dial-plate, "we shall all immediately return to our duty; for the maids will lie in bed if we stand idling thus."

Upon this, the weights, who had never been accused of *light* conduct, used all their influence in urging him to proceed; when, as with one consent, the wheels began to turn, the hands began to move, the pendulum began to swing,

and to its credit, ticked as loud as ever; while a red beam of the rising sun that streamed through a hole in the kitchen, shining full upon the dial-plate, it brightened up, as if nothing had been the matter.

When the farmer came down to breakfast that morning, upon looking at the clock, he declared that his watch had gained half an hour in the night.

JANE TAYLOR.

THE NEW CHURCH DOCTRINE.

THERE 's come a sing'lar doctrine, Sue,
Into our church to-day;
These cur'us words are what the new
Young preacher had to say: —
That literal, everlastin' fire
Was mostly in our eye;
That sinners dead, if they desire,
Can get another try;
He doubted if a warmer clime
Than this world could be proved;
The little snip — I fear some time
He'll get his doubts removed.

I've watched my duty, straight an' true,
An' tried to do it well;
Part of the time kept heaven in view,
An' part steered clear o' hell;
An' now half of this work is naught,
If I must list to him,
An' this 'ere devil I have fought
Was only just a whim;
Vain are the dangers I have braved,
The sacrifice they cost;
For what fun is it to be saved,
If no one else is lost?

Just think! — Suppose, when once I view
The heaven I've toiled to win,
A lot of unsaved sinners, too,
Comes walkin' grandly in!
An' acts to home, same as if they
Had read their titles clear,

An' looks at me, as if to say,
"We're glad to see you here!"
As if to say, "While *you* have been
So fast to toe the mark,
We waited till it rained, an' *then*
Got tickets for the ark!"

Yet there would be some in that crowd
I'd rather like to see:
My boy Jack — it must be allowed,
There was no worse than he!
I've always felt somewhat to blame,
In several different ways,
That he lay down on thorns o' shame
To end his boyhood days;
An' I'd be willin' to endure,
If that the Lord thought best,
A minute's quite hot temperature
To clasp him to my breast.

Old Captain Barnes was evil's son —
With heterodoxy crammed;
I used to think he'd be the one
If any one was damned;
Still, when I saw a lot o' poor,
That he had clothed and fed,
Cry desolately round his door
As soon as he was dead,
There came a thought I couldn't control,
That in some neutral land
I'd like to meet that scorched-up soul,
An' shake it by the hand.

Poor Jennie Willis, with a cry
Of hopeless, sad distress,
Sank sudden down, one night, to die.
All in her ball-room dress;
She had a precious little while
To pack up an' away;
She even left her sweet good smile —
'Twas on the face next day;
Her soul went off unclothed by even
One stitch of saving grace;
How *could* she hope to go to heaven,
An' start from such a place?

But once, when I lay sick an' weak,
She came an' begged to stay;
She kissed my faded, wrinkled cheek —
She soothed my pain away;
She brought me sweet bouquets of flowers
As fresh as her young heart —
Through many long an' tedious hours
She played a Christian part;
An' ere I long will stand aroun'
The singin' saints among,
I'll try to take some water down,
To cool poor Jennie's tongue.

But tears can never quench my creed,
Nor smooth God's righteous frown,
Though all the preachers learn to read
Their Bibles upside down.
I hold mine right side up with care
To shield my eyes from sin,
An' coax the Lord, with daily prayer,
To call poor wanderers in;
But if the sinners won't draw nigh,
An' take salvation's plan,
I'll have to stand an' see 'em try
To dodge hell if they can.

WILL CARLETON.

PENN'S MONUMENT.*

BORN in stormy times, he walked amid troubled waters all his days. In an age of bitter persecution and unbridled wickedness he never wronged his conscience. A favored member of court where statesmanship was intrigue and trickery, where the highest morality was corruption, and whose austerity was venality, he never stained his hands with a bribe. Living under a government at war with the people, and educated in a school that taught the doctrine of passive obedience, his life-long dream was of popular government, of a state where the people ruled. In his

* From "William Penn," in the "Lives of American Worthies." Published by Henry Holt and Co.

early manhood, at the bidding of conscience, against the advice of his nearest friends, in opposition to stern paternal commands, against every dictate of worldly wisdom and human prudence, in spite of all the dazzling temptations of ambition so alluring to the heart of a young man, he turned away from the broad, fair highway to wealth, post, position, and distinction that the hands of a king opened before him, and casting his lot with the sect weakest and most unpopular in England, through paths that were tangled with trouble and lined with pitiless thorns of persecution, he walked into honor and fame, and the reverence of the world, such as royalty could not promise and could not give him.

In the land where he planted his model State, to-day no descendant bears his name. In the religious society for which he suffered banishment from home, persecution, and the prison, to-day no child of his blood and name walks in Christian fellowship nor stands uncovered in worship. His name has faded out of the living meetings of the Friends, out of the land that crowns his memory with sincerest reverence. Even the uncertain stone that would mark his grave stands doubtingly among the kindred ashes that hallow the ground where he sleeps.

But his monument, grander than storied column of granite or noble shapes of bronze, is set in the glittering brilliants of mighty States between the seas. His noblest epitaph is written in the State that bears his honored name. The little town he planned to be his capital has become a city larger in area than any European capital he knew. Beyond his fondest dreams has grown the State he planted in the wilderness by "deeds of peace." Out of the gloomy mines that slept in rayless mystery beneath its mountains while he lived, the measureless wealth of his model State sparkles and glows on millions of hearthstones. From its forests of derricks and miles of creeping pipe-lines, the world is lighted from the State of Penn, with a radiance to which the sons of the founder's sons were blind.

Roaring blast and smoky forge and ringing hammer are tearing and beating the wealth of princes from his mines that the founder never knew. Clasping the continent, from sea to sea, stretches a chain of States as free as his own; from sunrise to sunset reaches a land where the will of the people is the supreme law, a land that never felt the press-

ace of a throne and never saw a sceptre. And in the heart of the city that was his capital, in old historic halls still stands the bell that first, in the name of the doctrines that he taught his colonists, proclaimed liberty throughout the land and to all the inhabitants thereof. This is his monument, and every noble charity gracing the State he founded is his epitaph.

R. J. BURDETT.

"ONLY A CRIPPLED SOLDIER!"

"HERE'S yer oranges, my hearties! jest imported from the South;
Fresh and sweet as smiles of beauty lingerin' round a maiden's mouth.
Walk right up and leave a nickel, to assist me on my course —
'Here to-day and gone to-morrow,' is the motto I endorse.
When we've sold the second dozen, Jack and I will sing a song,
For I've found a power in music to assist the thing along.
Jack's an infant I am raisin' — found him on the streets one night
Cuddled up behind a barrel, almost dead from cold and fright;
When I saw that he was starvin', and was far from being strong,
As he had no one to love him, I jest toted him along.
He has brought me piles o' comfort that I never knew before,
Since we sort o' jined our fortunes and enlisted for the war.
Half a dozen, did you say, sir? Now, that's hearty, I confess;
But you're sure to be the gainer in relievin' my distress.
In the bivouac and battle each one plays a special part,
But the stars that shine the brightest find their orbits in the heart.

"Crippled? Well, I'm slightly varied from the true Apollo plan,
That is said to form the standard for a model, handsome man;

I am largely built of timber, fashioned into arms and legs,
But I do a deal o' thumpin' on *these* sturdy wooden pegs.
Still the heart is there the same, sir, and my head is firm and clear,
When you reckon in the balance that I've turned my fiftieth year.
What is that you're saying? *Al'ays?* No, I wasn't al'ays so;
I was what the world calls handsome, in my youth, I'd have you know.
I was fitted out with riggin', jest as perfect as could be,
And could move about as graceful as you'd ever wish to see;
But I stood too near a cannon on the battle-field one day,
And my limbs were badly scattered when they bore my frame away.

"*Who's the next?* Here, Jack, you rascal, what are you in hidin' for?
You must never act the coward, though you *haven't* been to war,
The poor boy is rather modest, sort o' girlish in his ways;
But he'll change to diff'rent metal if he roughs it all his days.
He can beat the world at larnin', takes to books amazin' smart,
And has got the easiest letters in the alphabet by heart.
I am calculatin', somewhat, ere this nature pays its debt,
I shall have him educated for the halls of Congress yet.
What is that you're sayin', Jackey? You are feelin' kind o' cold?
Well, we'll hunt a warmer corner when these oranges are sold.
Here, I'll spare this ragged jacket! it will help the matter some.
And my frame's so used to freezin' it has long been sort o' numb.
We must never murmur, Jackey, at the hardness of our lot—
Though our country *has* forgot us, I am certain *God* has not.

"With Sherman? No, I followed Grant, sir, in the old Potomac fight;
When the rebel balls were whizzin' all about us day and night;
Where we had to *hew* our progress, every foot that marked the way,
And the troops were piled in furrows, like great swaths of new-mown hay.
'Neath a sun that poured in fury down upon devoted heads —
'Neath the freezing blasts of winter, with a snow-drift for our beds;
In the swamps, where venomed reptiles coiled about us as we passed,
Till we thought each fleeting moment was on earth to be our last.
I was with him, sir, at Richmond, when the rebel banner fell;
Layin' bleedin' by the ramparts durin' that triumphant yell.
Both my legs had passed from under, severed by a cannon ball,
And the quiverin' trunk lay helpless just beneath the rebel wall.
But my wail of bitter anguish told a nation it was free —
'Twas the price of threatened honor — 'twas the price of liberty!

"Married? No! thank God! I'm single. In my wanderin' mode of life
Heaven knows how I *should* manage, were I burdened with a wife!
What with all the weary heartaches I've been forced to battle through,
Freezin' nights, and starvin' mornin's, I have borne enough for two!
Days and days have passed together when I've sought in vain for bread!
Bitter nights have closed around me with no place to lay my head!
Should you wish to know the torments of a hell on earth begun,
Robbed of strength to fight and conquer, face the world as I have done!

Walk the streets a starvin' beggar, hawkin' wares, but few will buy;
Note the glance of scornful loathin', as each one goes heedless by.
Feel the pangs of gnawin' hunger that you have no means to stay,
Know that life is growin' feebler from exposure, day by day.
See the happy, smilin' faces, gracin' homes of wealth and ease,
Knowin' that *you* left your *manhood* on the battle-field for *these*.

"I was happy in my *youth*-time — happy in a maiden's love —
But she left me, when the angels called her to themselves above.
She was much too pure and gentle for this weary world of care,
So she's watchin' for my comin' in the mansions over there!
I can see her form to-night, sir, as I saw it once before,
When I left her in the gloamin' and enlisted for the war.
As she wept upon my shoulder, holy tears that glisten yet,
Were, as gems of rarest beauty, in the crown of freedom set.
In the bitter days that followed, many a cheering message came,
Bearin' words of peace and comfort in my absent darlin's name.
When I fell amid the carnage and the papers had me dead,
She just sank beneath the tidin's and resigned her life instead!
Well, I s'pose the blessed Master knew jest how it all would be,
And removed her to His kingdom, holdin' her, *in trust*, for me.

"I am sure, I beg your pardon! but, somehow, I al'ays find
That the world seems growin' brighter, when I thus relieve my mind.
Jack is sleepin' soundly, bless him! he has brought me only gain —
For his childish whims and fancies have renewed my youth again.

There is somethin', sir, in children, that commands our love at will!
Teachin' us the blissful lesson that the heart is human still!
What is that? a *five* you've given'? Do you really mean it, SURE?
May the Lord reward an' keep you for your kindness to the poor.
And another for the youngster? Why, the skies are clearin' fast;
But I guess the angels, maybe, have remembered us at last!
I am but a crippled soldier, lost among my fellow-men,
But I garner by the wayside, bits of wisdom now and then;
And I've often noticed, stranger, as from place to place I roam,
That the skies seem growin' brighter, as I'm drawin' nearer home."

J. RUSSELL FISHER.

THE DOCTOR'S WEDDING.

THOUGH oft I've read of love unblessed,
Like Thisbe's, at the tomb of Ninus,
And fair Genevra's in the chest,
And missing brides, and bridegrooms minus,
No tale that Ovid ever told,
Or minstrels sung, of love's disgressions,
Quite equals one I heard of old,
Or leaves upon my mind enscrolled
Such lively scenes and dire impressions.

About Van Tromp — a sounding name —
A dozen miles 'twas known to fame!
A man most dignified was he,
Little Turveydrop; so fine to see
That faces filled each window-pane.
As he passed by with whalebone-cane,
And goggles green astride his nose,
And flying cloak, and sable clothes.

The very children stopped and gazed
As on a Solomon in pomp.
The farmers' wives his wisdom praised,
And curtsied low to Dr. Van Tromp.
His hair was the finest wig in the place;
His teeth won the premium at the fair;
His corsets were bone, and his ruffles lace —
He was all made up of articles rare!

He was a bachelor quite lone.
The Widow Proctor, young and fair,
The finest farm was said to own
In all that section, rich and rare.
The Doctor — though in knowledge great —
In gold and lands had little share.

Now what more fitting thing could be
Than he should seek the widow's hand,
And flatter her that gold and land,
As ancient sages did declare,
Should be allied to high degree,
And guarded by a husband's care?
The widow thought him wondrous fair —
With goggles green and cane of bone,
And long and waving cue, anointed,
And teeth that took the premium A.
Her heart was not a heart of stone,
From all these charms to turn away;
She soon the wedding day appointed.

'Twas eve in fall — a glorious time
Of apples, peaches, plums, and pears,
And grapes that filled the vines with wine;
The doctor thought the moon so fine,
She must have polished her face benign;
On this particular evening to shine.
Now in that section there were *bears*,
And one adventurous bear was said
To make himself quite neighborly when
The harvest came. From the milking shed
Calves disappeared; pigs from the pen,
Astray by the neighborly bear were led,
And never, I'm told, returned again.

Now the doctor's way, on his wedding-night,
Through the woodlands lay. He went alone,
Of Bruin's tricks forgetful quite —
His only weapon his cane of bone.
The lovely face of nature viewing;
The moon, all bright with smiles above;
How could he dream of mischief brewing,
Or think of anything but love?

Now it may be the bear that day
The widow's pigs to mind did call —
It may be, but I cannot say;
But his path through the woodlands lay
Just as the shades began to fall,
And, being peacefully inclined,
Trotted the doctor's steps behind.

The doctor was a happy man —
How blessings brighten as they fly!
He presently to sing began,
And rolled his quavers loud and high;
The woods around
He made resound;
The grouse rose whirring from the brake,
As he declared, with trill and shake,
That he would "lay him down and die"
For "Bonnie Annie Laurie's" sake!

At last the pat of feet heard he —
He looked around — what eyes were those?
He ceased his song at upper G,
And drew his breath in "ah's" and "oh's."
He did not seize a club of oak,
Like Valentine, in Gallic fable,
And end the bear at one bold stroke,
But ran as fast as he was able.
His very teeth began to chatter,
And then dropped out. He left his wig
In air, in an o'erhanging twig,
And thought the loss but little matter.
His cloak flew to some unknown place,
And next he felt his stays unlace;
But he, like Shakspeare, only said
"I am undone," and onward sped.

And so with many a spectral leap,
Like Thisbe running from the lion,
He left behind the forest deep,
And o'er the moonlit clearing passed,
And reached the widow's door — 'twas fast —
It seemed as though the fates were iron!
He called, but no one heard the shout;
He called again, then spun about,
And, as the bear was drawing nigh,
He soon a slender trellis found
That trained a vine the gables o'er;
And up this ladder swift did fly,
Right glad to leave the solid ground;
And ope'd the dormer window high,
And leaped upon the chamber floor;
While Bruin upward turned his eye,
Rose on his haunches, and, no doubt,
Thought the proceeding wondrous spry.

The guests were startled by a sound —
A clatter overhead — a bound —
A step upon the stair — a moan —
In stalked a figure quite unknown,
And, 'mid the astonishment profound,
Like Don Quixote, bowing low,
Its thin arms swaying to and fro,
Drew itself up and gazed around.

The widow stared! Gasped he, "M'my d'dear!" —
Said she, "I pray, sir, who are you?"
Said he, "How d'dis'urbt you appear!
I've come to be your hus'and true!"
"But where's your hair?"
"I do declare,"
The doctor said, "My head is bare!"

"And where's your teeth and fair expression?
And figure fine,
And every sign
Of your most dignified profession?
You surely ar'nt the man that courted!"
And her opinion was supported.

The village squire decided there
That 'twould be very hard to swear
This figure spare was Dr. Van Tromp;
And when were found the teeth and hair,
And other relics in the swamp,
The widow said
She'd never wed
The fragments left her by the bear.

HEZEKIAH BUTTERWORTH.

THE POLICEMAN'S STORY.

I AM a policeman, 12,004;
Been on the force for years a score.
Lots of stories I have to tell,
Queer, sad, terrible, funny, and — well,
I'll stop to tell you a little thing
That happened a year ago last Spring:

Weary, but watchful, I paced my beat,
Up and down thro' a well-known street,
When, a block away, I saw a throng,
And hastened to find out what was wrong.
And there I saw a wee, wee girl,
Dainty and pretty with hair in curl.

Weeping, her hands in air she tossed,
Crying, "Oh, mamma, oh, papa, I's lost!"
One moment she wept, another she smiled,
And I thought of my own pet darling child
At home, and safe in her mother's arms;
So I tried to quiet this one's alarms;
At first her sunny head I caressed,
Then lifted her up to my beating breast,
And carried her, sobbing, sweet little fay,
To the station-house, only two blocks away.

Captain Caffry was then in command;
He took the lost baby-girl by the hand,
And, sitting her up on the desk by his side,
Pleasantly talked till no longer she cried,
But dried up her tears, and soon, smiling and gay,
Was earnestly lisping and prattling away;

And told of her beautiful mamma, her joys,
Her big-bearded papa, her home, and her toys;
How she heard a wandering German band play,
And, listening, followed them on their way;
Stopped when they stopped, and crossed when they crossed,
Grew tired, cried for home, and then found she was lost.

The door of the station-house opened just then,
Admitting a "drunk" between two of our men;
Not dirty and ragged, and spoiling for a fight,
But what you might term a "respectable tight."
Led up to the desk, he just lifted his eyes;
Started back, nearly fell, with a cry of surprise,
Of terror, of shame: "My Grace! Can it be?"
The instant had made him as sober as she.

"My papa! dear papa!" They kissed and caressed,
Both weeping, as she nestled close to his breast.
"Quite a scene!" said the captain, his face in a glow;
"I think you've been punished enough. You may go!"
The father bowed low — the little one smiled —
And passed through the door in the care of his child.
Do you know that I feel that I made a great vow
Just then, against liquor, and 'tis unbroken now?

THE VETERANS.

As you all know, comrades especially, I was but one of those leaders who fought in the war. We are veterans, and our white hairs tell us that, our feelings tell us that, and as we look over the crowds here to-day, we old soldiers realize the fact, without being told, that our days of fighting are past; that our days of rest and peace from the gun are here, and that we should, every one of us, come together on all suitable occasions to press each other's hands and look back and around us; to look back and see if that for which we fought honestly and truly, that for which we left our dead comrades upon the bare pine-fields of the South — whether it remains secure to us and whether we may now sleep in rest and peace.

Every man, be he American, English, French, or German, was as much interested that America should be a free land — to-day free from Maine to Texas and from Florida to Oregon — as you who are living here in your homes in New Hampshire. We fought for mankind. We fought for all the earth and for all civilization, and now stand pre-eminent among the nations of the earth, with a glorious past, a magnificent present and future, at which we may all rejoice.

Anybody can fight with a stranger; anybody can shoot an Indian down, and it is not a very hard thing to pull the trigger on a foreigner, but when we came to shoot each other, when we had to go to fight these Southern friends of ours, and sometimes fight in our own streets, that called for nerve, and the highest kind of nerve; and that is what I want the citizen to bear in mind when he looks at soldiers in this country. They went out, fought and conquered, and when it was done they stopped and went home.

The war has passed and a new generation has grown up, young men capable of doing as much as those who fought. From the simple mechanic and farmer we can secure as capable men for putting on the blue and buckling on the cartridge-belt and taking a rifle, and if their hearts be in the right place and their heads ordinarily clear, they can go on the field and be as good men as Sheridan, Sherman, and Grant ever were. We have yet 50,000,000 such people in America, and the work is not done yet. I do not think there are any more civil wars before us, but we must be prepared for what God brings us and be true to ourselves, our country, and our God.

GENERAL SHERMAN.

HOW HE MADE IT.

ONE sweltering day in hot July
A beer saloon he wandered by;

And finding that he was not seen,
He entered at the swinging screen;

And to rebuke the drinking men
Whom he observed around him then.

He ordered, as he knew he'd ought-ter,
A glass of pure, clear crystal water.

He set it down. "Ah, ha!" said he,
"Cold water is the drink for me!"

And so, to make it cold and nice,
He pounded in a little ice.

Healthful and good, sliced very thin,
He dropped a little lemon in;

And then he said, "Sweets to the sweet!"
And stirred some sugar in the treat.

To kind of brace the mixture up
He dashed some bitters in the cup;

Then just a lee-tle whisky — well,
Say twenty lines of "nonpareil;"

And while he stirred it with a spoon,
He sang, in gleeful tones, the tune:

"Water, cold water, pure and free —
Water is the drink for me!"

He raised his head; loud, loud he laughed,
And to the dregs the goblet quaffed.

"This is the New Amendment plan,"
Remarked the temperate Iowa man.

Then set his course, and held that day
Due West his calm, imperial way.

SIGNING THE PLEDGE.

How are ye, boys? No, thank ye, Bill, nothing to drink
to-day;
You look surprised to hear me say *no drink;* well, have
your way,
And fill it up, but let it set, for I've got a yarn to tell;
You know when I've been drinking, boys, I can't talk nigh
so well.

You're right, I *haint* been in to drink with you for quite a spell;
And the reason *why* I haint is what I'm going to tell.
I can tell the time correct, 'twas a week ago to-night;
The road was never crookeder, for I was pretty tight.

I fell into a ditch or two, but managed to get along —
The road hadn't no right or left, instead 'twas *right* and *wrong*.
I left the right and took the wrong, and so I lost my way —
Never got home till brain and sky was clear for another day.

Well, Ellen was up and watching, she hadn't slept a wink.
And 'taint the first night, neither, since the time I took to drink;
I's all beat out and wand'ring like; I laid down on the bed,
And laid there like a log for hours, jest as though I's dead.

But 'long in the afternoon, boys, I waked up clear and bright,
I looked out into the kitchen — it wa'nt no pleasant sight;
The room was neat and clean, for Ellen was always smart,
We might have been "well-to-do" if I'd only done my part.

Ellen sat by the window, in the only chair we had,
Patching for me and the children, and looking so worn and sad.
I thought of the wreck I'd made her — they called her "handsome Nell,"
When I was a thriving farmer, and she the village belle.

The children came from school, little Jenny, and manly Bert;
Bert was mad, and Jenny was crying as if she was hurt.
"Oh, mother," said Bert, "I know, I'm sure you'll say it's a sin,
But I doubled Joe right up, for calling our Jenny 'Gin.'

"Oh, mother, say, we ain't to blame for father, are we, now?'
I wouldn't drink if I was a man, I couldn't, anyhow.
I can remember father when he was like other men;
Folks wouldn't have called us 'drunkard's brats;' say, mother, would they then?"

I lay so still and quiet-like they thought me sound asleep,
The children kept a talking, and their words they sunk in deep.
I heard how little Jenny and my boy were knocked about,
And all because their father was a drunken, lazy lout.

I didn't eat no supper, I hadn't no appetite,
But I lay and thought it over, and tried to do what's right;
At first I said I'd drown myself, then thought of my poor wife;
She seemed to love me just as well, though I'd led her such a life.

So I changed my mind again, and saw things in clearer light;
I wouldn't throw my life away, but fix it over right.
And as soon as it was morning I went to Parson Ray,
And had him draw me up a pledge and signed that very day.

You'd oughter seen my Nellie when I told her what I'd done,
The look that came upon her face was brighter than the sun;
And then it faded right away, and left her worn and pale,
I read it jest as plain as day, she thought I'd surely fail.

That look made me feel stronger, for it somehow touched my pride,
I put out my hand for Ellen, and drew her to my side,
And I said with heaven to help me, and those I love so dear,
I'd keep the pledge I'd taken, and she needn't have a fear.

It's just a week to-day since I've tasted a single drop,
And it makes me kinder weak like, it's such a sudden stop,
So I'll take that glass you've mixed, Bill, and — and throw it in the fire.
Did you 'spose I meant to kill my wife, and make myself a liar?

Just see the blue flames flicker, and smell the sickening smell,
You may say just what you please, now, but it makes me think of — well,

I've drank it with you often, but I never will again;
Say, boys, come sign the pledge with me, and let's be better men.

Come, Bill, you know what cronies you and I have always been,
When we begun it we were boys, and it clung to us as men,
And you married Ellen's sister the day I married Nell;
How glad we was to get them 'twould be very hard to tell.

But you know we took to drinking in two or three short years,
And your wife she took to scolding, and mine she took to tears.
We made the road a crooked one, but, Bill, it ain't too late,—
You'll sign? O, bless you, my old friend; please God we'll make it straight.

And, Charlie, I can't help but think you've used your talents bad,
You's always clear ahead of us when you was but a lad.
We all went down to see you off when you to college went,
And none of us had been surprised if you'd been President.

But you was kinder weakly, and your stomach warn't jest right,
And you took to drinking wine, and finally you got tight.
You didn't begin with whiskey — 'twas wine, the very best,
And before you knew it, Charlie, fell as low as all the rest.

Your poor mother's heart is breaking, your father's bowed with shame,
And there's another, dearer yet, but I won't speak her name.
She gave you up for drinking, but her love she don't forget,
And now that you have signed the pledge you two'll be happy yet.

That's right, step up and sign the pledge, put down your
name right here;
George Smith, Will Foster, Henry James — you'll keep it,
never fear.
Landlord, I'm hurting trade, I know, but then I'm doing
right,
It's jest the same as making day out of the darkest night.

I hain't a thing against ye, sir; I only hate your trade,
And I hate the kind of failings your trade and you have
made.
But I ain't the kind of man that gives others all the blame,
I take my share, and I know right well, the rest'll do the
same.

But by your hopes of heaven, sir, and by your fears of hell,
Don't tempt us from our pledges — *What! not a drop you'll
sell?*
You're going to sign the pledge, and pour out the cussed stuff?
Hurrah! the landlord's signed his name, he's beat us, sure
enough!

FIRE! FIRE!

"No, thank ye, sir; no drink. I've taken the pledge. Don't smile, sir — I'm in earnest. The story you want to know about, all happened through drink. I was never given to take too much, sir; but I swore off altogether after that, and the very sight of it turns me sick.

"Well, sir, I'm head carpenter now, as you know, but when I took my first engagement at the theatre it was only as assistant. I ain't much improved in looks, manners, or book-learning, so you can judge for yourself, sir, that I wasn't the sort of chap for a pretty girl to fall in love with; but I loved her, sir, with all my heart.

"Poor Lizzie! To look at her now, you wouldn't think she was the prettiest of our ballet ladies — as good and honest a girl as ever lived. She knew I was struck, and was friendly-like to me, but just as if I'd been her brother —— Lord, sir, what's the good of my explaining? You gentlemen as writes plays, you know how it always turns out. She only cared for a man as broke her heart.

"He was the box-keeper; quite a gentleman to a poor assistant carpenter like me. Tom wasn't a bad sort when he was in his senses; but he had two devils for his masters — drink and jealousy. When they were on him he was like mad. When I heard he was going to marry Lizzie, I warned her. Bless you, sir, you might as well talk to a stone wall, as to a woman in love; the best on 'em will say hard things to you then She looked at me quite sorrowful

"'Joe, I'm surprised that you should do a mean thing!' Poor girl, she fancied I was speaking ill of Tom because I was left out in the cold.

"Well, sir, it went on pretty well for the first year. He did row Lizzie if any man spoke a civil word to her, but he kept off the drink pretty steadily. After little Rosie was born, poor Lizzie was so ill she had to give up dancing, and never could take to it again, so they lived on Tom's salary and what little washing she could take in. They still might have got on comfortably but Tom took to drinking again The more he drank the more jealous he was, and from year to year that home grew more wretched and miserable. Although Rosie was my godchild, I never dared go to see them, for fear of getting Lizzie into trouble; but whenever Rosie saw me on the street she would run up to be kissed, and dive in my pockets for sweeties, as I always kept for her. She was a perfect angel, that child was, sir; the only bit of happiness her mother had in the world, and the only one thing her drunken father cared for, and I think he worshipped the very ground she stood on.

"When she was five years old Tom got acquainted with a scoundrel of the name of Slug, who seemed to live at the public round the corner. About two years before Lizzie was married Slug, who was property-man at our house, got kicked out by our manager for insulting Lizzie, as having his own daughter in the leading parts he was very strict about the ladies of the company being treated with proper respect!

"Well, sir, this man Slug vowed vengeance on Lizzie and the manager, but he got into trouble shortly after and disappeared. When he turned up again in the neighborhood he soon contrived to drink himself into Tom's friendship, and then, sir, evil began brewing in earnest. Tom had of late, and on several occasions, been so very much the worse for drink when on duty that he was fined heavily. It was

the rule of the theatre, and had to be kept to, in justice to the other officials who behaved well. But our manager is a good man, sir, as you must know; he didn't want the innocent to suffer for the guilty, so whatever was stopped out of Tom's salary he sent to his wife, that she and the child should not starve, but on condition she should keep it dark from her husband. I do believe, sir, that the manager pretended the fines came oftener than they did, that he might help her without hurting her pride.

"How that blackguard, Slug, found it all out I can't tell, but he did. So on a Saturday, just before the morning performance, and after he'd primed up Tom with liquor he told him all about it.

"'And now what do you think of your precious manager?' he said, 'Why, you fool, don't you know I was kicked out of the theatre for being civil to Lizzie? Can't you see he's after her himself, you blind idiot?'

"You may guess, sir, that this foul lie nearly took away what little sense drink had left Tom, but he did not get violent, he was brooding-like, and when some one from the theatre took him off to his duty he followed him like one in a dream. When the audience had all taken their seats, Tom went and sat himself in the corner of an empty box, revolving in his head how best he could ruin the manager. Suddenly, near the end of the performance, a devilish idea flashed through his mind.

"'That would do for him and his theatre,' he muttered, and, hiding himself in one of the curtains of the box, he shouted: 'Fire! Fire!'

"Oh, sir, that awful cry; I shall never forget it. Our old theatre was very different from the present house, as any one can get out of quite easy. It was a pokey little place, with narrow passes, and the crush was awful. Sir, I say a man who causes a panic ought to be hung! By a sort of miracle there was only one death, but many were hurt and injured.

"I saw Tom coming out of the theatre after it was empty, with a wild look in his eyes, and fearing mischief I followed him home. The half-uttered curse stopped on his lips when he saw Lizzie alone, it was such a very unusual thing.

"'Where's the child?' he said, in a hoarse voice.

"'Please don't be angry, Tom; Rosie begged so hard I

had not the heart to say no. The landlady has taken her to the morning performance.'

"With a wild cry Tom rushed out into the street. As he met a crowd of people I saw him fall down as one struck dead. You guess, sir, it was the body of poor little Rosie that they were bringing home. The only child in the audience had been the only victim. The curse had fallen on the one thing Tom loved. Poor little angel, killed by her father! Our bad deeds always come home to us, sir; but it's seldom they come so quick.

"The poor mother lost her reason; it's a mercy she did. When Tom woke from his fainting fit he was an altered man; it was pitiful to see the way remorse was torturing him. From that day he only drank water; but it was too late, sir — it soon killed him.

"What's become of Lizzie, did you say, sir? She is my wife. Surprised at my marrying a woman as has lost her mind? Well, sir, she is more like my baby than my wife. There was no one living, sir, but me to take care of her; and, although she wouldn't know it, poor girl, I wouldn't give the neighbors any right to take away her character. Good of me, sir? Bless you, no. She has just enough sense left to know me; and when she says 'Kind Joe,' I wouldn't have any other man stand in my shoes for the world." MERIEM.

CONCURRENT TESTIMONY.

"Is it wrong to kiss?" asked a timid maid
Of the shimmering sands that border the deep.
But no answer she got save the wavelets played
A roundelay gay as they kissed her feet.

She asked the sun, but he only turned
His saucy face from the eastern sky,
And kissed her cheeks till they fairly burned,
And a tear of vexation dimmed her eye.

She asked the wind as it came from the south
The self-same question. The answer came,
For a zephyr sprang up and kissed her mouth
And ruby red lips till they seemed aflame.

She asked a youth who had chanced along,
And the moral question was solved in a thrice;
For he answered: "O maiden, it *may* be wrong,
But"—here he proved it—"It's very nice!"

If the sea, and sun, and soft south wind
Kiss unmolested by bolt or ban,
Where the heart is eager, and lips and mind
Are not reluctant, why shouldn't man?

THE CRUISE OF THE "NANCY JANE."

The sky was dark, and the iron-bound coast
Of the Battery loomed nigh,
When stout Ben Bow of the Nancy Jane
O'er the billows cast his eye;
But his eye returned, and the steadfast glare
Of his nose's tip renewed,
For the cast came too, that had dwelt therein
Ever since the world it viewed.

Then a sigh he heaved o'er the Nancy's bows,
With a wild convulsive throe,
And he muttered words which I can't repeat,
For his speech was somewhat low.
Then his glass he seized, and looked again,
With an anxious gaze and keen;
But the inky flood he swept in vain,
For he couldn't sweep it clean.

And aye the frown on his brow increased
As he marked the driving clouds,
While dead-eyes gleamed through the growing gloom,
And the air seemed full of shrouds.
Down into the fathomless deep he hove
The lead, with a seaman's prayer;
But the fathomless deep it proved indeed,
For there wasn't a fathom there.

Then murk and murkier grew the sky,
And fiercer rolled the tide,
And bold Ben Bow was quite unmanned,
So he raised his voice and cried.

Unmanned was he, and he well might be,
For his men were all ashore;
And he cried aloud, for he cried "Ahoy!
Till his cry became a roar.

"Ahoy!" he cried, and across the tide,
"Ay, ay!" his men reply;
But never they'd answered yet as tars,
Though they oft replied "Ay, ay!"
For though as staunch as tars may be,
Each day saw new disasters,
As the Nancy Jane was a brig, d'ye see,
And none can serve two masters

Then his mate drew Ben aside, who seemed,
As the crew said, "much consarned,"
For oft his shaggy brows he knit,
And his eyes at times he "darned."
For the dreaded blow seemed near at last,
And his hoard of choice Havanas
Had all been "smoked," so his mate opined,
To judge by the customs manners.

But higher and higher the waves arose,
And first the anchor parted,
And then, it was seen, not merely a plank,
But the whole of the ship had started.
When this the customs officer saw,
His heart grew sore with trouble,
For the captain toward him stretched his hands,
And the sight he saw was double.

At that, to the shore he madly rushed,
And shouted, "Avast! Belay!"
But small and smaller the Nancy grew,
For she quickly wore away.
And lo! as he watched that noble ship,
With a sort of shuddering quiver,
With her captain bold and her crew, went down—
But she only went down the river!

THE WAR WITH ALCOHOL.

AWAKE! nor longer sleep;
The bugle calls throughout the land;
Let not the few their vigils keep
With bitter foes on every hand.
The foe has been, full many a year,
Preparing for the strife,
And if we falter through our fear
He'll take our Nation's life.
Enlisted in his army strong
Are many thousand men,
Prepared for battle hard and long,
They care not where or when;
They vow they will destroy
Our temperance forts and walls,
Our forces scatter, man and boy,
Till the flag of Temperance falls.

Sound forth the bugle, call our men,
Our noble girls and boys,
Our women, too; let all come in
To share the victor's joys.
Our Grand Commander up on high
Commissions us to go;
He'll guide us with unerring eye
To victory o'er the foe.
Our battle will be long;
Bitter and fierce the strife;
Our foe is desperate and strong,
Hard fighting for his life.

And we must choose our weapons well,
And get our forces into line;
Bullets and guns will ne'er do well
In such a trying time.
With ballots we must arm our men,
And women, too, I say;
With temperance truths our girls and boys,
To battle in the fray.

See! how along our line
The battle has begun;
From Maine, Iowa, and Kansas, too,
We hear of vict'ries won.

And let us hope to see the day,
O'er California's sunny land,
When our flag floats; then we can say,
Blest Temperance rules on every hand;
And not alone our sunny clime,
But all our country great;
So may we safely victory claim
When Temperance rules in every State.
That is the end for which we strive;
The struggle then we'll ne'er give o'er,
Till Temperance sits upon the throne,
And Alcohol is down, to rise no more.

W. E. WILLIAMS.

ASKING THE GOV'NOR.

SMITH had just asked Mr. Thompson's daughter if she would give him a lift out of the slough of bachelordom, and she had said, "yes."

It therefore became necessary to get the old gentleman's permission, so, as Smith said, arrangements might be made to hop the conjugal twig.

Smith said he'd rather pop the interrogatory to all of old Thompson's daughters, and his sisters, and his lady-cousins, and his Aunt Hannah in the country, and the whole of his female relations, than ask old Thompson. But it had to be done, and so he went down and studied out a speech which he was to disgorge at old Thompson the very first time he set eyes on him. So Smith dropped in on him one Sunday evening, when all the family had meandered around to chapel, and found him doing a sum in beer measure.

"How are you, Smith?" said old Thompson, as the former walked in, white as a piece of chalk and trembling as if he had swallowed a condensed earthquake. Smith was afraid to answer, 'cause he wasn't sure about that speech. He knew he had to keep his grip on it while he had it there,

or it would slip from him quicker than an oiled eel through an auger hole. So he blurted out: —

"Mr. Thompson, sir; perhaps it may not be unknown to you that, during an extended period of some five years, I have been busily engaged in the prosecution of a commercial enterprise ——"

"Is that so, and keepin' it a secret all this time, while I thought you were keepin' shop? Well, by George, you're a 'cute soul, ain't you?"

Smith had to begin and think it over again, to get the run of it: —

"Mr. Thompson, sir; perhaps it may not be unknown to you that, during the extended period of five years, I have been busily engaged in the prosecution of a commercial enterprise, with the determination to secure a sufficient maintenance——"

"Sit down, Smith, and help yourself to beer. Don't stand there holding your hat like a blind beggar with paralysis. I never have seen you behave yourself so queer in all my born days."

Smith had been knocked out again, and so he had to wander back to take a fresh start: —

"Mr. Thompson, sir; it may not be unknown to you that, during an extended period of five years, I have been engaged in the prosecution of a commercial enterprise, with the determination to procure a sufficient maintenance——"

"Well?" asked old Thompson, but Smith went on:

"In the hope that some day I might enter wedlock, and bestow my earthly possessions upon one whom I could call my own. I have been a lonely man, sir, and have felt that it is not good for a man to be alone; therefore I would——"

"Neither is it; I'm glad you came in. How's your father?"

"Mr. Thompson, sir;" said Smith, in despairing confusion, raising his voice to a yell, "it may not be unknown to you that, during an extended period of a lonely man, I have been engaged to enter wedlock, and bestowed all my enterprise on one whom I could determine to be good for certain possessions—no, I mean, that is—Mr. Thompson, sir; it may not be unknown——"

"And then, again, it may. Look here, Smith; you'd better lay down and take something warm, you ain't well."

Smith's eyes stuck wildly out of his head with embarrassment, but he went on again:

"Mr. Thompson, sir; it may not be lonely to you to prosecute me whom a friend, for a commercial maintenance, but — but — eh — dang it — Mr. Thompson, sir; it ——"

"Oh, Smith, you talk like a fool. I never saw a more first-class idiot in the course of my whole life. What's the matter with you, anyhow?"

"Mr. Thompson, sir;" said Smith, in an agony of bewilderment, "it may not be unknown that you prosecuted a lonely man who is not good for a commercial period of wedlock for some five years, but ——"

"See here, Smith, you're drunk, and if you can't behave better than that, you'd better leave; if you don't, I'll chuck you out, or I'm a Dutchman."

"Mr. Thompson, sir;" said Smith, frantic with despair, "it may not be known to you that my earthly possessions are engaged to enter wedlock five years with a sufficiently lonely man, who is not good for a commercial maintenance ——"

"The very deuce he isn't. Now you jist git up and git out, or I'll knock what little brains out you've got left."

With that, old Thompson took Smith and shot him into the street as if he'd run him against a locomotive train at the rate of sixty miles an hour. Before old Thompson had time to shut the front door, Smith collected his legs, and one thing and another that were lying around on the pavement arranged himself in a vertical position, and yelled out: —

"Mr. Thompson, sir; it may not be known to you ——" which made the old fellow so pink with rage, that he went out and set a bull terrier on Smith, before he had a chance to lift a brogan, and there was a scientific dog fight, with odds in favor of the dog, for he had an awful hold for such a small animal.

Smith afterwards married the girl and lived happily about two months. At the end of that time he told a confidential friend that he would willingly take more trouble, and undergo a million more dog bites — to get rid of her.

THE SOLDIERS' MONUMENT.

THIS monument, faultless as a work of art, built by the generosity of willing hands and loving hearts, and dedicated in sight of many thousands of citizens, should be a perpetual rebuke to those who cavil about or croak over our impending dangers. This monument is not raised to ornament a fleeting political shadow or crumbling fabric of government. It is raised to add its weight of confidence in the best country and government on earth, a country and government whose course of greatness and whose measure of national purity and perfection are but begun. This monument is placed here to extol the fact that these men of Augusta did not suffer nor die for naught, when they devoted their existence to the noblest military contest of which the human race can boast.

For no barren project of local vanity, not for the revival of the traditions of combats of slaughter on hostile fields, but to immortalize patriots and patriotism do we, this day, in sober demeanor, with serious thought and with reverent words, bequeath to succeeding generations this gift of the loyal living in remembrance of the loyal dead. A great Union soldier once said: "Forgiving the past but not forgetting it, we will cherish the memories of the war forever." That with us is a universal sentiment, for we have nothing, save our religion, that is purer or loftier to cherish than the memories of the war. At once we dismiss the weak babble, that anniversaries reserved to decorate the final resting-place of soldiers and monuments erected in their esteem, tend to keep alive the recollections of the civil war. Thank God those recollections are, and are to be kept alive. Alas for the American nation when it no longer thrills with conscious pride to the memories of its grandest hour. It would be a criminal slander on human nature to impute indifference on our part to the men who made us what we are.

Whiter for the fires that strove to blacken and blast its fame; purer for the blood that watered its base; stronger for the tramp of armed men around its assaulted portals; we now and here rejoice in the rescued temple of our liberties. The credit and glory of the undesecrated walls of that temple and of its unmoved foundations is due to the

work and hardships of the American soldier. By the soldier is meant the men who did the fighting. They are here with us, of all parties, of every creed, of different birth; they are here riveted together in the fellowship and brotherhood of common services. Some have not with them the entire quota of legs or arms belonging to able-bodied men, but their hearts have lost nothing, for they are the hearts of loyal soldiers, and no truer hearts of oak ever beat in human form anywhere. And for you, who have come to us to-day with armless sleeves and hobbling upon crutches, my prayer is, and my hope is, that there is a better land, where the "missing links" may one day be found, and where the departed members may be restored never to part again.

Thirty-two regiments of infantry, seven companies of artillery, two regiments of cavalry, Maine sent to the front. It was their service, combined with that of their loyal associates, which made us in this year of our Lord, 1882, *fellow-citizens*, enjoying the same rights, the same chances, the same incalculable career, whether we hail from the East or from the West, or are of the South or the North. We are fellow-citizens to the crack of doom, entitled to equality of citizenship in our common country, whether we once wore blue or gray, or whether we fell into line and kept step to the music of Dixie and double-quicked to the rebel yell, or carried our muskets at right-shoulder shift to the refrain of John Brown or the tune of Yankee Doodle. Honor, then, to the American soldier now and ever. Honor him in sermon and speech. Honor him in sonnet, stanza, and epic. Honor him in the historic page. Honor him in the unwasting forms by which art seeks to prolong his well-earned fame. Honor the volunteer soldier who, when his work of devastation and death was ended, put aside his armor, melting into the sea of citizenship, making no ripple of disturbance upon its vast surface. Honor the citizen soldier of America, who never knew the feeling of vindictiveness or revenge.

JOHN L. SWIFT.

GOOD-BYE, PROUD WORLD.

Good-bye, proud world! I'm going home;
Thou art not my friend; I'm not thine;
Too long through weary crowds I roam —
A river ark on the ocean brine;
Too long I am tossed like the driven foam;
But now, proud world, I'm going home.

Good-bye to Flattery's fawning face,
To Grandeur with his wild grimace;
To upstart Wealth's averted eye,
To supple office, low and high;
To crowded halls, to court and street,
To frozen hearts and hasting feet;
To those who go and those who come,
Good-bye, proud world, I'm going home.

I go to seek my own hearthstone,
Bosomed in yon green hills alone,
A secret lodge in a pleasant land,
Whose groves the frolic fairies planned,
Where arches green the livelong day
Echo the blackbird's roundelay,
And evil men have never trod,
A spot that is sacred to thought and God.

Oh, when I am safe in my sylvan home,
I mock at the pride of Greece and Rome;
And when I am stretched beneath the pines,
Where the evening star so holy shines,
I laugh at the lore and pride of man,
At the sophist schools, and the learned clan;
For what are they all in their high conceit,
When man in the bush with God may meet?

EMERSON, 1832.

THE FUNNY SMALL BOY.

THE room it was hot,
And the room it was school;
So the schoolmaster got
Fast asleep on his stool,
While the scholars were having a frolic,
Bereft of all reason and rule.

When a ball, badly aimed,
Struck the schoolmaster's nose,
Which was long and quite famed
For its terrible blows;
Then he scowled on those innocent scholars,
In a way he could scowl when he chose.

"Come hither, my child,
Thou art writing, I see;"
And the schoolmaster smiled,
"Come now right on my knee;
The up-strokes, you see, are made lightly,
The down-strokes are heavy and free."

While that small boy was tanned,
Came his laughter — a roar,
And the teacher, so bland,
Was now vexed, and he swore;
For the way that the awful boy giggled,
Was something unheard of before.

The teacher was beat
And deprived of his wind,
So he stood on his feet,
That small boy, who just grinned,
And who shook with a mirth that was jolly,
And felt of his back which was skinned.

"Now tell me, my son,
Ere this rod I employ
Once again for thy fun,
Why this wonderful joy?"
"Such a joke," cried the lad, wild with laughter,
"You're whipping — ha, ha — the wrong boy."

H. C. DODGE.

THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT.

Behold the mansion reared by dædal Jack!

See the malt stored in many a plethoric sack,
In the proude cirque of Ivan's bivouac.

Mark how the rat's felonious fangs invade
The golden stores in John's pavilion laid.

Anon with velvet foot and Tarquin strides,
Subtle Grimalkin to his quarry glides —
Grimalkin grim that slew the fierce rodent,
Whose tooth insidious Johann's sack-cloth rent,

Lo! now the deep-mouthed canine foes assault,
That vexed the avenger of the stolen malt,
Stored in the hallowed precincts to that hall
That rose complete at Jack's creative call.

Here stalks the impetuous cow with crumpled horn,
Whereon the exacerbating hound was torn,
Who bayed the feline slaughter-beast, that slew
The rat predacious, whose keen fangs ran through
The textile fibres that involve the grain
Which lay in Hans' inviolate domain.

Here walks forlorn the damsel crowned with rue,
Lactiferous spoils from vaccine dugs who drew
Of that corniculate beast whose tortuous horn
Tossed to the clouds, in fierce, vindictive scorn,
The hurrying hound, whose braggart bark and stir
Arched the lithe spine and reared the indignant fur
Of Puss, that, with verminicidal claw,
Struck the weird rat, in whose insatiate maw,
Lay reeking malt, that erst in Juan's courts we saw.

Robed in senescent garb, that seems, in sooth,
Too long a prey to Chronos' iron tooth,
Behold the man whose amorous lips incline,
Full of young Eros' osculative sign,
To the lorn maiden, whose lact-albic hands
Drew albu-lactic wealth from lacteal glands
Of that immortal bovine, by whose horn,

Distort to realms ethereal, was borne
The beast Catulean, vexer of that sly
Ulysses quadrupedal, who made die
The old mordacious rat that dared devour
Ante-cedaneous ale in John's domestic bower.

Lo! here, with hirsute honors doffed, succinct
Of saponaceous locks, the priest who linked
In Hymen's golden bands the torn unthrift,
Whose means exiguous stared from many a rift,
Even as he kissed the virgin all forlorn,
Who milked the cow with implicated horn,
Who in fine wrath the canine torturer skied,
That dared to vex the insidious muricide,
Who let auroral effluence through the pelt
Of the sly rat that robbed the palace Jack had built.

The loud cantankerous shanghai comes at last,
Whose shouts arouse the shorn ecclesiast,
Who sealed the vows of Hymen's sacrament
To him who, robed in garments indigent,
Exosculates the damsel lachrymose,
Th' emulgator of that horned brute morose
That tossed the dog, that worried the cat, that kilt
The rat, that ate the malt, that lay in the house that
Jack built.

BLIND NED.

WHO is dat 'ar a playin'? Shucks! I wish I wuzn't blin';
But when de Lord he tuk my eyes, he lef' my yeahs behin'.
Is dat you, Mahs'r Bob? I t'ought I reco'nized your bowin';
I said I knowed 'twas you, soon's I heered de fiddle goin'.

Sho! dat ain't right — jes' le' me show you how to play dat tune —
I feel like I could make de fiddle talk dis afternoon.
Now, don't you see that counter's jes a little bit too high?
Well, nebber min' — I guess you'll learn to tune her by an' by.

You's jes' like all musicianers 'dat learns to play by note;
You ain't got music in you, so you has to hab it wrote;
Now dat ain't science — why de debbil don't you play by yeah?
For dat's de onlies' kin' ob music fittin' for to heah.

Do you suppose, when David wuz a pickin' on de harp,
He ebber knowed de difference atwixt a flat an' sharp!
But any tune you called for, he could pick it all de same,
For David knowed de music, 'dough he didn't know de name.

Now, what shill I begin on? Somefin' lively, fas', an' quick?
Well, sah, jes pay attention, an' I'll gib you "Cap'n Dick."
Yah! yah! young mahs'r, don't you feel jes' like you want to pat?
You'll hab to practise for awhile before you ekals dat!

Dere ain't nobody round dis place kin play wid Uncle Ned,
Dey isn't got it in deir fingers, ne'der in deir head;
Dat fiddler Bill, dey talks about — I heerd him play a piece,
An' I declar' it sounded like a fox among de geese.

A violeen is like an 'ooman; mighty hard to guide,
An' mighty hard to keep in order arter onct it's buyed;
Dere's alluz somefin' 'bout it out ob kelter, more or less,
An' 'tain't de fancies' lookin' ones dat alluz does de bes'.

Dis yere's a splendid inst'ument — I 'spec' it cost a heap;
You ra'ly ought to let me have dis fiddle for to keep —
It ain't no use to you, sah; for, widout it's in de man,
He kain't get music out de fines' fiddle in de lan'.

It 'quires a pow'r ob science for to fiddle, sah, you see,
An' science comes by natur'; dat's de way it is wid me —
But Lord! dat Bill! It 'muses me to heah him talkin' big;
You nebber heerd a braggin' fiddler play a decent jig!

Dat Bill, he is a caution, sah! I wonder now whar he
An' oder folks I knows of — yes, I wonder whar'll dey be
In Hebben, when de music's playin', an' de angels shout —
If Bill should jine in de chorus, dey would hab to put him out.

Well, good-by, Mahs'r Bob, sah; when you's nuffin' else to do,
Jes' sen' for dis ol' darkey, an' he'll come an' play for you;
An' don't give up your practisin' — you's only sebenteen —
An' mebbe when you s ol' as me you'll play de violeen.

IRWIN RUSSELL.

HOW TIM'S PRAYER WAS ANSWERED.

"It's a staving night for a supper, a hot supper, too!" said Tim Mulligan to himself, as he stood on the street corner, in the piercing wind and sleet.

"A staving night," he reiterated, as he peered wistfully into the bakery windows across the way. He had not had any dinner at all, and not enough breakfast to say so — nothing but a crust or two that he had picked up.

A little humpbacked, stunted figure, with dull blue eyes, and thin, peaked face surmounted by a brimless hat; his clothes — evidently odds and ends, for the pants were too large and long, while the coat-sleeves came scarcely below his elbows, and the garment would not begin to button around him, — that was Tim.

"It's a bad night," he said, as a gust of wind nearly took him off his feet. "The worst I ever knew," which was saying a good deal, for Tim had known some pretty rough nights in the course of his short life. "There isn't much show of my getting anything to-night. Guess I'd better be turnin' in, pervided nobody's gone and took possession of my 'stablishment."

But just as Tim was bracing himself up to face the storm, some one came driving down street at a furious rate, stopping so close to Tim that he took a step to get out of the way.

"Here, bub, hold my horse for me," said the clergyman, springing out; and handing the lines to Tim, he disappeared.

"Mebbe he'll give me as much as — five cents," thought Tim, when he had thoughtfully obeyed. "If he does, I'll have a plate of hot beans and biscuits. P'r'aps he'll give me ten. Wouldn't I have a reg'lar square meal then? But 'taint likely."

Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed. Tim's hands were pretty thoroughly benumbed when at last the gentleman returned in as much haste as he had gone away.

"Here's something for you," he said, dropping a couple of coins into Tim's hand, then springing into his buggy.

Tim went under the nearest gaslight to examine.

"Jeru-sa-lum!" he gasped, as he saw two bright silver dimes in his rather grimy hands. Twenty cents seemed a small fortune to Tim, for there were so few things a poor little handicapped like him could do.

He would have such a supper, baked beans, biscuit, and a cup of coffee, and even a doughnut; he could have all that, and still have some money left for to-morrow. The richest man in the whole great city would have felt poor beside Tim, as clutching his treasure, he crossed the street. There crouching in the shadow of a doorway, he spied two miserably forlorn little figures.

"Hallo!" he said. "What you doin' here?"

"Nuthin," replied the oldest, briefly.

"What makes you stay here then? Why don't you go home?" continued Tim.

"Haint got none," was the reply; and then feeling the hearty, though unspoken sympathy of one of their own sort, the little waif added, as he drew his jacket-sleeve across his eyes, "They carried mother up to the graveyard, yonder," pointing in the direction of the pauper burial ground, "and we hasn't anybody now, nor nowheres to stay."

As Tim stood deliberating, the bakery door opened and a most appetizing odor came out, reminding Tim of his promised treat.

"Hungry?" he asked.

"You bet!" was the inelegant but emphatic response.

Tim reflected on his own real good fortune. He could get biscuits, cold beans, and perhaps doughnuts enough for them all.

"Tell you what, fellers," he said magnificently. "I was just a-goin' to order my bill of fare. I'll increase my order a little, have a party and invite you two. As it's rather suddint, we won't none of us bother 'bout party cloes. 'Greeable?"

"Reckon we air," was the quick response. Tim made a dive for the bakery, trying hard not to smell the coffee, nor

think how much better a plate of hot beans would be than the same cold.

"Now," he said, reappearing, "all aboard. Follow me sharp."

You may be sure the two little ragamuffins did as they were bidden.

"'Taint much further," said Tim, at length. "I'm a little s'lect in my tastes, you see, so I live rather out of the way o' folks," laughed he.

Presently they struck the railroad, and then, in a few minutes, he stopped before an unused, dilapidated flag house.

"Walk in," he asked, politely holding open the door, which was only a plank. There certainly was not much room to spare when they were all in, but then they were sheltered, and all the warmer for being obliged to keep close together.

"Reckon we'd better interduce before grub, hadn't we? I'm Tim Mulligan — at your service, an' happy to meet you."

"The boys in the alley call us Speckle-Face and Red-Top. I'm Speckle-Face, and he's Red-Top," said the spokesman.

"Now we're all right, and old friends," said Tim, complacently. "Let's pitch in."

He had spread the contents of his parcels on an old box, and without waiting for another invitation, didn't they "pitch in!" Tim watched them with solid satisfaction, contenting himself with one small biscuit and half a doughnut. "I'm not so very partic'ler about beans. Guess I won't indulge to-night," he said.

It did not take very long to clear up, even to the last crumb of Tim's spread.

"Now, sirs," said the brave little host, when it was gone and his guests showed signs of departing, "my accommerdations are not so very grand, but they're better than the storm. You'd better stop over night."

As his guests made no remonstrance to this suggestion, he made ready a bed for them, a little straw and a part of an old blanket.

"You bundle up together, and you'll stand it, I guess," said Tim.

"You're an awful good feller," said Speckle-Face, grate-

fully, as he pulled the blanket up round him, and in less than five minutes both were sound asleep.

It was cold over by the door, which did not quite fit, and Tim missed his blanket, but did not say anything. Something came to him as he lay there shivering. Sometimes he had crept into a church because it was warm there; he had caught at such times snatches of sermons about One who once lived on earth, was homeless, poor, and lonely — "like us fellers," thought Tim. But now this mysterious One was great, rich, and powerful, and had a beautiful home. And those who would love and try to please Him could go and live with Him. He thought it over, as the bitter wind and storm came through the cracks upon him. He drew as far away as possible, up beside his little visitors, who lay sleeping so peacefully.

"I wonder if Jesus'd listen to a poor hunchy like me." And clasping his stiff little hands, Tim knelt and made his first prayer: "Dear Lord, I don't know who you are, nor where you live, but I wish you'd take me to your home, for I am so tired, hungry, and cold. And I'll do everything I can, if you'll tell me how. Won't you please take me? Amen."

Then Tim lay down again, and somehow he did not mind the cold as before.

"I — wonder — when — He'll take me — and how I'll get there," he thought dreamingly.

It was broad daylight before the two little visitors awoke, threw off the blanket and sat up.

"Hello!" said Speckle-Face, but Tim did not stir.

"Hello!" piped Red-Top.

Then Speckle-Face shook him, but still Tim's eyes did not open, and Red-Top, putting his hand out on his face, started back in terror.

"He's cold, like she was," he sobbed.

Tim's prayer had been answered; he had gone to that home where they shall hunger no more.

And I think he had found that, inasmuch as he had done it unto the least of earth's sorrowing ones, he had done it unto Him.

LITTLE ROCKET'S CHRISTMAS.

I'll tell you how the Christmas came
To Rocket — no, you never met him,
That is, you never knew his name,
Although 'tis possible you've let him
Display his skill upon your shoes;
A bootblack — Arab, if you choose.
Has inspiration dropped to zero
When such material makes a hero?

And who was Rocket? Well, an urchin,
A gamin, dirty, torn, and tattered,
Whose chiefest pleasure was to perch in
The Bowery gallery; there it mattered
But little what the play might be —
Broad farce or point-lace comedy —
He meted out his just applause
By rigid, fixed, and proper laws.

A father once he had, no doubt,
A mother on the Island staying,
Which left him free to knock about
And gratify a taste for straying
Through crowded streets. 'Twas there he found
Companionship and grew renowned.
An ash-box served him for a bed —
As good, at least, as Moses' rushes —
And for his daily meat and bread,
He earned them with his box and brushes.

An Arab of the city's slums,
With ready tongue and empty pocket,
Unaided left to solve life's sums,
But plucky always — that was Rocket!

'Twas Christmas eve, and all the day
The snow had fallen fine and fast;
In banks and drifted heaps it lay
Along the streets. A piercing blast
Blew cuttingly. The storm was past,
And now the stars looked coldly down
Upon the snow-enshrouded town.

Ah, well it is if Christmas brings
Good-will and peace which poet sings!
How full are all the streets to-night
With happy faces, flushed and bright!
The matron in her silks and furs,
The pompous banker, fat and sleek,
The idle, well-fed loiterers,
The merchant trim, the churchman meek,
Forgetful now of hate and spite,
For all the world is glad to-night!
All, did I say? Ah, no, not all,
For sorrow throws on some its pall;
And here, within the broad, fair city,
The Christmas time no beauty brings
To those who plead in vain for pity,
To those who cherish but the stings
Of wretchedness and want and woe,
Who never love's great bounty know,
Whose grief no kindly hands assuage,
Whose misery mocks our Christian age.
Pray ask yourself what means to them
That Christ is born in Bethlehem!

But Rocket? On this Christmas eve
You might have seen him standing where
The city's streets so interweave
They form that somewhat famous square
Called Printing House. His face was bright,
And at this gala, festive season,
You could not find a heart more light —
I'll tell you in a word the reason:
By dint of patient toil in shining
Patrician shoes and Wall street boots,
He had within his jacket's lining
A dollar and a half — the fruits
Of pinching, saving, and a trial
Of really Spartan self-denial.

That dollar and a half was more
Than Rocket ever owned before
A princely fortune, so he thought,
And with those hoarded dimes and nickels
What Christmas pleasures may be bought!

A dollar and a half! It tickles
The boy to say it over, musing
Upon the money's proper using;
"I'll go a gobbler, leg and breast,
With cranberry sauce and fixin's nice,
And pie, mince pie, the very best,
And puddin' — say a double slice!
And then to doughnuts how I'll freeze;
With coffee — guess that ere's the cheese!
And after grub I'll go to see
The 'Seven Goblins of Dundee.'
If this yere Christmas ain't a buster,
I'll let yer rip my Sunday duster!"

So Rocket mused as he hurried along,
Clutching his money with grasp yet tighter,
And humming the air of a rollicking song,
With a heart as light as his clothes — or lighter.
Through Centre street he makes his way,
When, just as he turns the corner at Pearl,
He hears a voice cry out in dismay,
And sees before him a slender girl,
As ragged and tattered in dress as he,
With hand stretched forth for charity.

In the street-light's fitful and flickering glare
He caught a glimpse of the pale, pinched face —
So gaunt and wasted, yet strangely fair,
With a lingering touch of childhood's grace
On her delicate features. Her head was bare,
And over her shoulders disordered there hung
A mass of tangled, nut-brown hair.
In misery old as in years she was young,
She gazed in his face. And, oh! for the eyes, —
The big, blue, sorrowful, hungry eyes, —
That were fixed in a desperate frightened stare.

Hundreds have jostled her by to-night —
The rich, the great, the good, and the wise,
Hurrying on to the warmth and light
Of happy homes — they have jostled her by,
And the only one who has heard her cry,
Or, hearing, has felt his heart-strings stirred,
Is Rocket — this youngster of coarser clay,

This gamin, who never so much as heard
The beautiful story of him who lay
In the manger of old on Christmas day!

With artless pathos and simple speech,
She stands and tells him her pitiful tale;
Ah, well if those who pray and preach
Could catch an echo of that sad wail!
She tells of the terrible battle for bread,
Tells of a father brutal with crime,
Tells of a mother lying dead,
At this, the gala Christmas-time;
Then adds, gazing up at the starlit sky,
"I'm hungry and cold, and I wish I could die."

What is it trickles down the cheek
Of Rocket — can it be a tear?
He stands and stares, but does not speak;
He thinks again of that good cheer
Which Christmas was to bring; he sees
Visions of turkey, steaming pies,
The play-bills — then, in place of these,
The girl's beseeching, hungry eyes;
One mighty effort, gulping down
The disappointment in his breast,
A quivering of the lip, a frown,
And then while pity pleads her best,
He snatches forth his cherished hoard,
And gives it to her like a lord!

"Here, freeze to that; I'm flush, yer see,
And then you needs it more 'an me!"
With that he turns and walks away,
So fast the girl can nothing say,
So fast he does not hear the prayer
That sanctifies the winter air,
But he who blessed the widow's mite
Looked down and smiled upon the sight.

No feast of steaming pies or turkey,
No ticket for the *matinée*,
All drear and desolate and murky,
In truth a very dismal day.
With dinner on a crust of bread,

And not a penny in his pocket,
A friendly ash-box for a bed —
Thus came the Christmas day to Rocket,
And yet — and here's the strangest thing —
As best befits the festive season,
The boy was happy as a king —
I wonder can you guess the reason?

VANDYKE BROWN.

A JACK AT ALL TRADES.*

CHARACTERS.

SIMON STONE. NANCY NIPPER.

SIMON. Now, for Nancy. Won't her eyes glisten when she sees me in this stunning get-up. I never did care for dress, but when I made up my mind to look after Nancy again, I said to myself, "Simon, don't be shabby; do the thing in style;" and here I am, bran new from top to toe, from shampoo to shining leather, but with the same old heart inside of me, advancing double-shuffle to the tune of "Nancy is my darling."

(*Enter* NANCY, R. I. E.)

NANCY. Now, I'd like to know who — Good gracious! it's Simon Stone.

SIMON. Nancy, it is. Simon, your Simon. How d'ye do (*offers hand*).

NANCY. Well, I declare! rigged out like a dancing-jack. You extravagant dog!

SIMON (*turning round*). Gay, ain't it. Cut to order by an artist (*turns round*): look at the "elegance of expression" in the back of that coat, and the *tout ensemble* of these pantaloons. That's what he called 'em, and I know they're there, for I paid for 'em. Nothing shabby about me.

NANCY. Well, and what brings you here?

SIMON. Love, Nancy. Devotion, Nancy. Affection, Nancy ——

NANCY. Rubbish! Are you a fool? Don't you know better than to bring such things here on a washing-day?

SIMON. Washing-day! Confound it, Nancy! I'm fated to call when you are in the suds.

* Scene from the play of "Comrades," by George M. Baker.

NANCY. Because you always manage to come on a Monday, when I am up to my ears in a tub.

SIMON. Monday — washing-day. That's why somebody says cleanliness comes next to godliness.

NANCY. Simon Stone, what is your present occupation?

SIMON. Nancy, at present I am a humble but earnest worker in the confectionery business. (*Takes box from left coat pocket.*) Have a gum-drop? (*Offers paper.*)

NANCY. No. Confectionery, indeed!

SIMON (*puts back paper*). Nancy, the first time I ever approached you in humble admiration of your grace and beauty — try a peppermint. (*Takes paper from his pocket and offers it.*)

NANCY (*folding her arms and turning her head*). No.

SIMON (*puts back paper*). I was a butcher, — an honest, but bloody butcher. You turned up your nose at the scent of blood.

NANCY. Because I knew you wouldn't stick to it.

SIMON. I turned my back upon the slaughtered beeves, and in that higher sphere, the milky way, sought to win your love. You politely but firmly assured me I couldn't *comet* in that line.

NANCY. I detest the whole race! Milk and water men! I'd like to scald them.

SIMON. Cremation would suit them better. My next venture was in the slippery walks of butter and cheese.

NANCY. Anything but a butter man.

SIMON. So I found out when I attempted to slide into your affections in that *rôle*. You told me to cheese it. I understood you, and I sought a higher sphere. I embarked in the electric line, and went out into the highways and by-ways to introduce lightning-rods.

NANCY. Well, I found no fault with that.

SIMON. No; but I did.

NANCY. Why didn't you stick to it?

SIMON. Well, Nancy (*takes box from breast pocket.*) Have a little taffy?

NANCY. No.

SIMON. (*puts paper back.*) The fact is, lightning-rods don't agree with me. I started out in high hopes, one bright morning, espied an unprotected dwelling, rushed boldly up, rung the bell, notwithstanding a gigantic mastiff lay at my feet, evidently occupied in catching flies.

Gent came to the door. In glowing speech I introduced my business. He rubbed his chin, said, "I don't know," and looked at the dog. I found he did know, when he further remarked, with emphasis, "Rover, here's another rod man." The dog gave a growl and rose. An electric shock was communicated to my being, and I calculated in one brief minute how many rods I should have to clear before reaching my rods outside. Then I left, closely attended by the dog. I didn't own these clothes then; if I had my loss would have been greater, especially in that part of my wardrobe which the artist designated as *tout ensemble*. I gave up that business in disgust.

NANCY. Well, what next?

SIMON. Then I sought the confectioner's emporium. Said I, here's a sweet occupation, and a candid young man can win more lasses' favor in this line than in any other. Nancy, you would adore me could you see me in a white apron, pulling molasses candy over a hook (*with gestures*), with a long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull together!

NANCY. Simon Stone, you are a fool!

SIMON. Nancy, I know it, or I should not be running after you, when I've been snubbed time and time again. Nancy, dear Nancy, look upon me with favor this time. (*Takes box from pocket behind.*) Accept this slight but sweet offering of affection. (*Presents it.*) Real French candy — made it myself.

NANCY (*taking box*). Do you mean to stick to this business, Simon?

SIMON. To be sure I do, and it's an awful sticky business I tell you — specially setting down into a pan of hot, cooling candy when you aren't particularly tired.

NANCY. Well, Simon, if I thought I could trust you.

SIMON. You can, Nancy, you can. O Nancy, quit this scrubbing existence and work for me alone!

NANCY. I'll think about it when you find the soap.

SIMON. I have found it in the confectionery line.

NANCY. Well, Simon, I must confess I rather like that.

SIMON. Do you, Nancy. Eurekey, I've found it at last! (*Takes paper from pants pocket.*) Try a chocolate drop, Nancy. (*She takes it.*) You make me so happy. It's just the nicest business you ever looked upon. Rows and rows of shelves filled with all that's sweet to the tooth — and profitable to the dentist. And then the girls, Nancy.

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